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VOLUME IX

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A NOISELESS PATIENT SPIDER

A noiseless patient spider,
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,
It launchèd forth filament, filament, filament, out of itself,
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you O my soul where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them,
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul.

WALT WHITMAN

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

THE genesis of the University Library lies in a compilation of "Little Masterpieces," the first of which were published more than twenty-five years ago. The material included in these volumes was selected by able editors and writers whose experience was great and whose taste was excellent. Out of the "Little Masterpieces" grew a course in liberal education which was known as the Pocket University, and out of the Pocket University grew, finally, the University Library.

The publishers most gratefully acknowledge their debt to the editors who compiled the original volumes: Bliss Perry, Henry van Dyke, Hardin Craig, Thomas L. Masson, Asa Don Dickinson, the late Hamilton W. Mabie, George Iles, the late Dr. Lyman Abbott, and others.

Some of the most important material contained in the Pocket University is, of course, included in the University Library but the sequence has been entirely changed and the scope of the work greatly broadened. Fully two thirds of the material is new and the literature of the world has been ransacked to find appropriate text to fit the basic educational needs of the modern public.

READERS' NOTE—9.

SINCE his death in 1931 we have missed the brisk exhortations of Arnold Bennett, himself so enthusiastic a reader that he felt obliged on several occasions to preach friendly sermons on the subject of literature. One of the best known of these is "Literary Taste and How to Form It." He begged his "congregation" first of all to rid themselves of the idea that a knowledge of literature was a polite accomplishment, like a knowledge of etiquette. To him literature was not an adjunct to life; it was life itself at its highest point of intensity. "Is it nothing to you," he cried, "to understand that the world is not a dull place? Is it nothing to you to be led out of the tunnel on to the hillside, to have all your senses quickened, to be invigorated by the true savor of life, to feel your heart beating under that correct necktie of yours?" That literature could be confined to fifteen minutes, half an hour, or even two or three hours a day was to him ridiculous. Literature was something to be made a part of yourself, something to affect every hour of the day, to remake your relations with the world. How to attain this blessing? Go after it. Surround yourself with books. Read them.

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VOLUME IX

THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

THE VOICE OF THE HEAVENS

THE spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
Th' unwearied Sun from day to day
Does his Creator's power display;
And publishes, to every land,
The work of an Almighty hand.

Soon as the evening shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous tale;
And nightly, to the listening Earth,
Repeats the story of her birth:
Whilst all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole.

What though in solemn silence all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball;
What though nor real voice nor sound
Amidst their radiant orbs be found?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice;
For ever singing as they shine:
"The Hand that made us is divine."

JOSEPH ADDISON.

SIR ROGER ON MEN OF FINE PARTS

Credabant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurexerat.

JUVENAL, *Satire xiii, 54, 55.*

I KNOW no evil under the sun so great as the abuse of the understanding, and yet there is no one vice more common. It has diffused itself through both sexes, and all qualities of mankind; and there is hardly that person to be found, who is not more concerned for the reputation of wit and sense, than honesty and virtue. But this unhappy affectation of being wise rather than honest, witty than good-natured, is the source of most of the ill habits of life. Such false impressions are owing to the abandoned writings of men of wit, and the awkward imitation of the rest of mankind.

For this reason Sir Roger was saying last night, that he was of opinion that none but men of fine parts deserve to be hanged. The reflections of such men are so delicate upon all occurrences which they are concerned in, that they should be

exposed to more than ordinary infamy and punishment, for offending against such quick admonitions as their own souls give them, and blunting the fine edge of their minds in such a manner, that they are no more shocked at vice and folly than men of slower capacities. There is no greater monster in being than a very ill man of great parts. He lives with a man in a palsy, with one side of him dead. While perhaps he enjoys the satisfaction of luxury, of wealth, of ambition, he has lost the taste of good-will, of friendship, of innocence. Scarecrow, the beggar, in Lincoln's-inn-fields, who disabled himself in his right leg, and asks alms all day to get himself a warm supper and a trull at night, is not half so despicable a wretch, as such a man of sense. The beggar has no relish above sensations; he finds rest more agreeable than motion; and while he has a warm fire and his doxy, never reflects that he deserves to be whipped. Every man who terminates his satisfaction and enjoyments within the supply of his own necessities and passions is, says Sir Roger, in my eye, as poor a rogue as Scarecrow. "But," he continued, "for the loss of public and private virtue, we are beholden to your men of parts forsooth; it is with them no matter what is done, so it is done with an air. But to me, who am so whimsical in a corrupt age as to act according to nature and reason, a selfish man, in the most shining circumstance and equipage, appears in the same condition with the fellow above-mentioned, but more contemptible in proportion to

what more he robs the public of, and enjoys above him. I lay it down therefore for a rule, that the whole man is to move together; that every action of any importance is to have a prospect of public good; and that the general tendency of our indifferent actions ought to be agreeable to the dictates of reason, of religion, of good-breeding; without this, a man, as I have before hinted, is hopping instead of walking, he is not in his entire and proper motion."

While the honest knight was thus bewildering himself in good starts, I looked attentively upon him, which made him, I thought, collect his mind a little. "What I aim at," says he, "is to represent that I am of opinion, to polish our understandings, and neglect our manners, is of all things the most inexcusable. Reason should govern passion, but instead of that, you see, it is often subservient to it; and, as unaccountable as one would think it, a wise man is not always a good man." This degeneracy is not only the guilt of particular persons, but also, at some times, of a whole people; and perhaps it may appear upon examination, that the most polite ages are the least virtuous. This may be attributed to the folly of admitting wit and learning as merit in themselves, without considering the application of them. By this means it becomes a rule, not so much to regard what we do, as how we do it. But this false beauty will not pass upon men of honest minds and true taste. Sir Richard Blackmore says, with as much good sense as virtue,

"It is a mighty dishonor and shame to employ excellent faculties and abundance of wit, to humor and please men in their vices and follies. The great enemy of mankind, notwithstanding his wit and angelic faculties, is the most odious being in the whole creation." He goes on soon after to say, very generously, that he undertook the writing of his poem, "to rescue the Muses out of the hands of ravishers, to restore them to their sweet and chaste mansions, and to engage them in an employment suitable to their dignity." This certainly ought to be the purpose of every man who appears in public, and whoever does not proceed upon that foundation injures his country as fast as he succeeds in his studies. When modesty ceases to be the chief ornament of one sex, and integrity of the other, society is upon a wrong basis, and we shall be ever after without rules to guide our judgment in what is really becoming and ornamental. Nature and reason direct one thing, passion and humor another. To follow the dictates of the two latter is going into a road that is both endless and intricate; when we pursue the other, our passage is delightful, and what we aim at easily attainable.

I do not doubt but England is at present as polite a nation as any in the world; but any man who thinks can easily see, that the affectation of being gay and in fashion has very near eaten up our good sense and our religion. Is there anything so just as that mode and gallantry should be built upon exerting ourselves in what is proper

and agreeable to the institutions of justice and piety among us? And yet is there anything more common than that we run in perfect contradiction to them? All which is supported by no other pretension than that it is done with what we call a good grace.

Nothing ought to be held laudable or becoming, but what nature itself should prompt us to think so. Respect to all kinds of superiors is founded methinks upon instinct; and yet what is so ridiculous as age? I make this abrupt transition to the mention of this vice, more than any other, in order to introduce a little story, which I think a pretty instance that the most polite age is in danger of being the most vicious.

"It happened at Athens, during a public representation of some play exhibited in honor of the commonwealth, that an old gentleman came too late for a place suitable to his age and quality. Many of the young gentlemen, who observed the difficulty and confusion he was in, made signs to him that they would accommodate him if he came where they sat. The good man bustled through the crowd accordingly; but when he came to the seats to which he was invited, the jest was to sit close and expose him, as he stood, out of countenance, to the whole audience. The frolic went round all the Athenian benches. But on those occasions there were also particular places assigned for foreigners. When the good man skulked towards the boxes appointed for the Lacedæmonians, that honest people, more virtuous

than polite, rose up all to a man, and with the greatest respect, received him among them. The Athenians being suddenly touched with a sense of the Spartan virtue and their own degeneracy, gave a thunder of applause; and the old man cried out, 'The Athenians understand what is good, but the Lacedæmonians practise it.'"

RICHARD STEELE.

A SUNDAY AT SIR ROGER'S

Ἀθανάτους μὲν πρῶτα θεούς, νόμῳ ὡς διάκειται, Τιμᾶ

PYTHAGORAS.

I AM always very well pleased with a country Sunday, and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. Sunday clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country fellow dis-

tinguishes himself as much in the churchyard, as a citizen does upon the 'Change, the whole parish politics being generally discussed in that place, either after sermon or before the bell rings.

My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing; he has likewise given a handsome pulpit cloth, and railed in the communion table at his own expense. He has often told me that, at his coming to his estate, he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a Common Prayer Book: and at the same time employed an itinerant singing master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the Psalms, upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation, he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer nobody to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and, if he sees anybody else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servant to them. Several other of the old Knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing Psalms half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it;

sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces "Amen," three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when everybody else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one John Matthews to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This John Matthews it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the Knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see anything ridiculous in his behavior; besides that the general good sense and worthiness of his character makes his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The Knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side, and every now and then inquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church,—which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechising day, when Sir Roger has been pleased

with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a Bible to be given him next day for his encouragement, and sometimes accompanies it with a flitch of bacon to his mother. Sir Roger has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church service, has promised, upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir Roger and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable, because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the squire, and the squire, to be revenged on the parson, never comes to church. The squire has made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers; while the parson instructs them every Sunday in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon that he is a better man than his patron. In short, matters are come to such an extremity, that the squire has not said his prayers either in public or private this half year; and that the parson threatens him, if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people; who are so used to be dazzled with riches, that

they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate as of a man of learning; and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

THE COVERLEY ECONOMY

Paupertatis pudor et fuga.

HORACE, *Epistles*, I, xviii, 24.

ECONOMY in our affairs has the same effect upon our fortunes which good breeding has upon our conversations. There is a pretending behavior in both cases, which, instead of making men esteemed, renders them both miserable and contemptible. We had yesterday at Sir Roger's a set of country gentlemen who dined with him: and after dinner the glass was taken, by those who pleased, pretty plentifully. Among others I observed a person of a tolerable good aspect, who seemed to be more greedy of liquor than any of the company, and yet, methought, he did not taste it with delight. As he grew warm, he was suspicious of everything that was said; and as he advanced towards being fuddled, his humor grew worse. At the same time his bitterness seemed to be rather an inward dissatisfaction in his own mind than any dislike he had taken at the company. Upon hearing his name, I knew him to be a gentleman of a considerable fortune in

this county, but greatly in debt. What gives the unhappy man this peevishness of spirit, is, that his estate is dipped, and is eating out with usury; and yet he has not the heart to sell any part of it. His proud stomach, at the cost of restless nights, constant inquietudes, danger of affronts, and a thousand nameless inconveniences, preserves this canker in his fortune, rather than it shall be said he is a man of fewer hundreds a year than he has been commonly reputed. Thus he endures the torment of poverty, to avoid the name of being less rich. If you go to his house you see great plenty, but served in a manner that shows it is all unnatural, and that the master's mind is not at home. There is a certain waste and carelessness in the air of everything, and the whole appears but a covered indigence, a magnificent poverty. That neatness and cheerfulness which attends the table of him who lives within compass is wanting, and exchanged for a libertine way of service in all about him.

This gentleman's conduct, though a very common way of management, is as ridiculous as that officer's would be, who had but few men under his command, and should take the charge of an extent of country rather than of a small pass. To pay for, personate, and keep in a man's hands a greater estate than he really has, is of all others the most unpardonable vanity, and must in the end reduce the man who is guilty of it to dishonor. Yet if we look round us in any county of

Great Britain, we shall see many in this fatal error; if that may be called by so soft a name which proceeds from a false shame of appearing what they really are, when the contrary behavior would in a short time advance them to the condition which they pretend to.

Laertes has fifteen hundred pounds a year, which is mortgaged for six thousand pounds; but it is impossible to convince him that if he sold as much as would pay off that debt he would save four shillings in the pound, which he gives for the vanity of being the reputed master of it. Yet if Laertes did this, he would perhaps be easier in his own fortune; but then Irus, a fellow of yesterday, who has but twelve hundred a year, would be his equal. Rather than this shall be, Laertes goes on to bring well-born beggars into the world, and every twelve month charges his estate with at least one year's rent more by the birth of a child.

Laertes and Irus are neighbors, whose ways of living are an abomination to each other. Irus is moved by the fear of poverty, and Laertes by the shame of it. Though the motive of action is of so near affinity in both, and may be resolved into this, "That to each of them poverty is the greatest of all evils," yet are their manners very widely different. Shame of poverty makes Laertes launch into unnecessary equipage, vain expense, and lavish entertainments; fear of poverty makes Irus allow himself only plain necessaries,

appear without a servant, sell his own corn, attend his laborers, and be himself a laborer. Shame of poverty makes Laertes go every day a step nearer to it, and fear of poverty stirs up Irus to make every day some further progress from it.

These different motives produce the excesses which men are guilty of in the negligence of and provision for themselves. Usury, stock-jobbing, extortion, and oppression have their seed in the dread of want; and vanity, riot, and prodigality, from the shame of it: but both these excesses are infinitely below the pursuit of a reasonable creature. After we have taken care to command so much as is necessary for maintaining ourselves in the order of men suitable to our character, the care of superfluities is a vice no less extravagant than the neglect of necessaries would have been before.

Certain it is, that they are both out of nature, when she is followed with reason and good sense. It is from this reflection that I always read Mr. Cowley with the greatest pleasure. His magnanimity is as much above that of other considerable men as his understanding; and it is a true distinguishing spirit in the elegant author who published his works, to dwell so much upon the temper of his mind and the moderation of his desires. By this means he has rendered his friend as amiable as famous. That state of life which bears the face of poverty with Mr. Cowley's *great Vulgar* is admirably described; and it is no small

satisfaction to those of the same turn of desire, that he produces the authority of the wisest men of the best age of the world to strengthen his opinion of the ordinary pursuits of mankind.

It would methinks be no ill maxim of life, if according to that ancestor of Sir Roger whom I lately mentioned, every man would point to himself what sum he would resolve not to exceed. He might by this means cheat himself into a tranquillity on this side of that expectation, or convert what he should get above it to nobler uses than his own pleasures or necessities. This temper of mind would exempt a man from an ignorant envy of restless men above him, and a more inexcusable contempt of happy men below him. This would be sailing by some compass, living with some design; but to be eternally bewildered in prospects of future gain, and putting on unnecessary armor against improbable blows of fortune, is a mechanic being which has not good sense for its direction, but is carried on by a sort of acquired instinct towards things below our consideration and unworthy our esteem.

It is possible that the tranquillity I now enjoy at Sir Roger's may have created in me this way of thinking, which is so abstracted from the common relish of the world: but as I am now in a pleasing arbor, surrounded with a beautiful landscape, I find no inclination so strong as to continue in these mansions, so remote from the ostentatious scenes of life; and am at this present writing philosopher enough to conclude with Mr. Cowley,

If e'er ambition did my fancy cheat,
With any wish so mean as to be great,
Continue, Heaven, still from me to remove
The humble blessings of that life I love!

RICHARD STEELE.

MORNING IN MAY*

THE busy larke, messager of daye,
Salueth in hire song the morwe graye;
And fyry Phebus ryseth up so brighte,
That al the orient laugheth of the lighte,
And with his stremes dryeth in the greves
The silver dropes, hongyng on the leeves.
And Arcite, that is in the court ryal
With Theseus, his squyer principal,
Is risen, and loketh on the merye day.
And for to doon his observaunce to May,
Remembryng on the poynt of his desir,
He on his courser, stertyng as the fir,
Is riden, into the feeldes him to pleye,
Out of the court, were it a myle or tweye.
And to the grove, of which that I yow tolde,
By aventure his wey he gan to holde,
To maken him a garland of the greves,
Were it of woodebynde or hawethorn leves,
And lowde he song ayens the sonne scheene:
"May, with alle thy floures and thy greene,
Welcome be thou, wel faire, fressche May,
I hope that I som grene gete may."

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

---

*From "The Canterbury Pilgrims: The Knightes Tale."

SPRING*

BEHOLD the young, the rosy spring
Gives to the breeze her scented wing,
While virgin graces, warm with May,
Fling roses o'er her dewy way.
The murmuring billows of the deep
Have languished into silent sleep;
And mark! the flitting sea-birds lave
Their plumes in the reflecting wave;
While cranes from hoary winter fly
To flutter in a kinder sky.
Now the genial star of day
Dissolves the murky clouds away,
And cultured field and winding stream
Are freshly glittering in his beam.
Now the earth prolific swells
With leafy buds and flowery bells;
Gemming shoots the olive twine;
Clusters bright festoon the vine;
All along the branches creeping,
Through the velvet foliage peeping,
Little infant fruits we see
Nursing into luxury.

SPRING IN CAROLINA

SPRING, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

---

*From the Greek of Anacreon. Translation of Thomas Moore.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
Its fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of Winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,
The brown of autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

In gardens you may note amid the dearth,
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows need must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by, before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate.

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start,
If from a beech's heart,
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
"Behold me! I am May!"

HENRY TIMROD.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

DO YOU ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,
The linnet, and thrush say "I love, and I love!"
In the winter they're silent, the wind is so strong;
What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing and loving—all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings, and forever sings he,
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me."

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

THE GREEN LINNET

BENEATH these fruit-tree boughs that shed
Their snow-white blossoms on my head,
With brightest sunshine round me spread
Of spring's unclouded weather,
In this sequestered nook how sweet
To sit upon my orchard seat!
And birds and flowers once more to greet,
My last year's friends together.

One have I marked, the happiest guest
In all this covert of the blest:
Hail to Thee, far above the rest
In joy of voice and pinion!
Thou, Linnet! in thy green array,
Presiding Spirit here to-day,
Dost lead the revels of the May;
And this is thy dominion.

While birds, and butterflies, and flowers,
Make all one band of paramours,
Thou, ranging up and down the bowers,
Art sole in thy employment:
A Life, a Presence like the Air,
Scattering thy gladness without care,
Too blest with any one to pair;
Thyself thy own enjoyment.

Amid yon tuft of hazel trees,
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,
Behold him perched in ecstasies,
Yet seeming still to hover;

There! where the flutter of his wings
Upon his back and body flings
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,
  That cover him all over.

My dazzled sight he oft deceives,
A Brother of the dancing leaves;
Then flits, and from the cottage eaves
  Pours forth his song in gushes;
As if by that exulting strain
He mocked and treated with disdain
The voiceless Form he chose to feign,
While fluttering in the bushes.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

TO THE CUCKOO

O BLITHE New-comer! I have heard,
I hear thee and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call thee Bird,
  Or but a wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear,
From hill to hill it seems to pass,
  At once far off, and near.

Though babbling only to the Vale,
  Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
  Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the Spring!
  Even yet thou art to me
No bird, but an invisible thing,
  A voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my school-boy days
  I listened to; that Cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
  In bush, and tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
  Through woods and on the green;
And thou were still a hope, a love;
  Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet;
  Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
  That golden time again.

O blessèd bird! the earth we pace
  Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, faery place;
  That is fit home for Thee!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

PHILOMELA

HARK! ah, the nightingale—
  The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,
Still nourishing in thy bewilder'd brain
That wild, unquench'd, deep-sunken, old-world
pain—
Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy rack'd heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou to-night behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and sear'd eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the
leaves!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal pain!

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

TO A NIGHTINGALE

SWEET bird! that sing'st away the early hours
Of winters past or coming, void of care;
Well pleasèd with delights which present are,
Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling flowers:
To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers
Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,
And what dear gifts on thee he did not spare,
A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.
What soul can be so sick which by thy songs
(Attired in sweetness) sweetly is not driven
Quite to forget earth's turmoils, spites, and wrongs,
And lift a reverent eye and thought to heaven?
Sweet, artless songster! thou my mind dost raise
To airs of spheres,—yes, and to angels' lays.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

ROBERT OF LINCOLN

MERRILY swinging on briar and weed
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o-'link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln is gaily dressed,
Wearing a bright black wedding-coat;

White are his shoulders and white his crest.
  Hear him call in his merry note:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new boat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
    Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
  Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
  Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
    Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
  One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
  Pouring boasts from his little throat:
    Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
    Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
    Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
  Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
  Robert is singing with all his might:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food.
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work, and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o-'link,
Spink, spank, spink:
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

RIBE*

TO SAY that Ribe was an old town hardly describes it to readers at this day. A town might be old and yet have kept step with time. In my day Ribe had not. It had never changed its step or its ways since whale-oil lanterns first hung in iron chains across its cobblestone-paved streets to light them at night. There they hung yet, every rusty link squeaking dolefully in the wind that never ceased blowing from the sea. Coal oil, just come from America, was regarded as a dangerous innovation. I remember buying a bottle of "Pennsylvania oil" at the grocer's for eight skilling, as a doubtful domestic experiment. Steel pens had not crowded out the old-fashioned goose-quill, and pen-knives meant just what their name implies. Matches were yet of the future. We carried tinder boxes to strike fire with. People shook their heads at the telegraph. The day of the stage coach was not yet past. Steamboat and railroad had not come within forty miles of the

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*From "The Making of an American," by Jacob Riis. Copyright, 1904, by the Macmillan Company, by permission of the Macmillan Company.

town, and only one steam factory—a cotton mill that was owned by Elizabeth's father. At the time of the beginning of my story, he, having made much money during the early years of the American war through foresight in having supplied himself with cotton, was building another and larger, and I helped to put it up. Of progress and enterprise he held an absolute monopoly in Ribe, and though he employed more than half of its working force, it is not far from the truth that he was unpopular on that account. It could not be well otherwise in a town whose militia company yet drilled with flint-lock muskets. Those we had in the school for the use of the big boys—dreadful old blunderbusses of the pre-Napoleonic era—were of the same pattern. I remember the fright that seized our worthy rector when the German army was approaching in the winter of 1863, and the haste they made to pack them all up in a box and send them out to be sunk in the deep, lest they fall into the hands of the enemy; and the consternation that sat upon their faces when they saw the Prussian needle-guns.

The watchman still cried the hour at night. They do, for that matter, yet. The railroad came to town and the march of improvement struck it, after I had gone away. Century-old institutions were ruthlessly upset. The police force, which in my boyhood consisted of a man and a half—that is, one with a wooden leg—was increased and uniformed, and the night watchman's chant was stopped. But there are limits to everything.

The town that had been waked every hour of the night since the early Middle Ages to be told that it slept soundly, could not possibly take a night's rest without it. It lay awake dreading all sorts of unknown disasters. Universal insomnia threatened it; and within a month, on petition of the entire community, the council restored the songsters, and they squeak to this day. This may sound like exaggeration; but it is not. It is a faithful record of what took place and stands so upon the official minutes of the municipality.

When I was in Denmark last year, I looked over some of those old reports, and had more than one melancholy laugh at the account of measures taken for the defence of Ribe at the first assault of the Germans in 1849. That was the year I was born. Ribe, being a border town on the line of the coveted territory, set about arming itself to resist invasion. The citizens built barricades in the streets—one of them, with wise forethought, in front of the drug store, "in case any one were to faint" and stand in need of Hoffman's drops or smelling-salts. The women filled kettles with hot water in the houses flanking an eventual advance. "Two hundred pounds of powder" were ordered from the next town by foot-post, and a cannon that had stood half buried a hundred years, serving for a hitching-post, was dug up and put into commission. There being a scarcity of guns, the curate of the next village reported arming his host with spears and battle-axes as the next best thing. A rumor of a sudden advance of the enemy

sent the mothers with babes in arms scurrying north for safety. My mother was among them. I was a month old at the time. Thirty years later I battled for the mastery in the police office in Mulberry Street with a reporter for the *Staats-Zeitung* whom I discovered to be one of those invaders, and I took it out of him in revenge. Old Cohen carried a Danish bullet in his arm to remind him of his early ill-doings. But it was not fired in defence of Ribe. That collapsed when a staff officer of the government, who had been sent out to report upon the zeal of the Ribe men, declared that the town could be defended only by damming the river and flooding the meadows, which would cost two hundred daler. The minutes of the council represent that that was held to be too great a price to pay for the privilege of being sacked, perhaps, as a captured town; and the citizen army disbanded.

If the coming of the invading army could have been timed to suit, the sea, which from old was the bulwark of the nation, might have completed the defences of Ribe without other expense to it than that of repairing damages. Two or three times a year, usually in the fall, when it blew long and hard from the northwest, it broke in over the low meadows and flooded the country as far as the eye could reach. Then the high causeways were the refuge of everything that lived in the fields; hares, mice, foxes, and partridges huddled there, shivering in the shower of spray that shot over the road, and making such stand as they

could against the fierce blast. If the "storm flood" came early in the season, before the cattle had been housed, there was a worse story to tell. Then the town butcher went upon the causeway at daybreak with the implements of his trade to save if possible, by letting the blood, at least the meat of drowned cattle and sheep that were cast up by the sea. When it rose higher and washed over the road, the mail-coach picked its way warily between white posts set on both sides to guide it safe. We boys caught fish in the streets of the town, while red tiles flew from the roofs all about us, and we enjoyed ourselves hugely. It was part of the duty of the watchman who cried the hours to give warning if the sea came in suddenly during the night. And when we heard it we shivered in our beds with gruesome delight.

The people of Ribe were of three classes: the officials, the tradesmen, and the working people. The bishop, the burgomaster, and the rector of the Latin School headed the first class, to which my father belonged as the senior master in the school. Elizabeth's father easily led the second class. For the third, it had no leaders and nothing to say at that time. On state occasions lines were quite sharply drawn between the classes, but the general kindliness of the people caused them at ordinary times to be so relaxed that the difference was hardly to be noticed. Theirs was a real neighborliness that roamed unrestrained and without prejudice until brought up with a round turn

at the barrier of traditional orthodoxy. I remember well one instance of that kind. There lived in our town a single family of Jews, well-to-do tradespeople, gentle and good, and socially popular. There lived also a Gentile woman of wealth, a mother in the strictly Lutheran Israel, who fed and clothed the poor and did no end of good. She was a very pious woman. It so happened that the Jewess and the Christian were old friends. But one day they strayed upon dangerous ground. The Jewess saw it and tried to turn the conversation from the forbidden topic.

"Well, dear friend," she said, soothingly, "some day, when we meet in heaven, we shall all know better."

The barrier was reached. Her friend fairly bristled as she made reply:

"What! *Our* heaven? No, indeed! We may be good friends here, Mrs——, but there—really, you will have to excuse me."

Narrow streams are apt to run deep. An incident which I set down in justice to the uncompromising orthodoxy of that day, made a strong impression on me. The two concerned in it were my uncle, a generous, bright, even a brilliant man, but with no great bump of reverence, and the deacon in the village church where they lived. He was the exact opposite of my uncle: hard, unlovely, but deeply religious. The two were neighbors and quarreled about their fence-line. For months they did not speak. On Sunday the deacon strode by on his way to church, and my

uncle, who stayed home, improved the opportunity to point out of what stuff those Pharisees were made, much to his own edification. Easter week came. In Denmark it is, or was, custom to go to communion once a year, on Holy Thursday, if at no other season, and, I might add, rarely at any other. On Wednesday night, the deacon appeared, unbidden, at my uncle's door, craving an interview. If a spectre had suddenly walked in, I do not suppose he could have lost his wits more completely. He recovered them with an effort, and bidding his guest welcome, led him courteously to his office.

From that interview he came forth a changed man. Long years after I heard the full story of it from my uncle's own lips. It was simple enough. The deacon said that duty called him to the communion table on the morrow, and that he could not reconcile it with his conscience to go with hate toward his neighbor in his heart. Hence he had come to tell him that he might have the line as he claimed it. The spark struck fire. Then and there they made up and were warm friends, though agreeing in nothing, till they died. "The faith," said my uncle in telling of it, "that could work in that way upon such a nature, is not to be made light of." And he never did after that. He died a believing man.

It may be that it contributed something to the ordinarily democratic relations of the upper-class men and the trades-people that the latter were generally well-to-do, while the officials mostly

had a running fight of it with their incomes. My father's salary had to reach around to a family of fourteen, nay, fifteen, for he took his dead sister's child when a baby and brought her up with us, who were boys all but one. Father had charge of the Latin form, and this, with a sense of grim humor, caused him, I suppose, to check his children off with the Latin numerals, as it were. The sixth was baptized Sextus, the ninth Nonus, though they were not called so, and he was dissuaded from calling the twelfth Duodecimus only by the certainty that the other boys would miscall him "Dozen." How I escaped Tertius I don't know. Probably the scheme had not been thought of then. Poor father! Of the whole fourteen but one lived to realize his hopes of a professional career, only to die when he had just graduated from the medical school. My oldest brother went to sea; Sophus, the doctor, was the next; and I, when it came my time to study in earnest, refused flatly and declared my wish to learn the carpenter's trade. Not till thirty years after did I know how deep the wound was I struck my father then. He had set his heart upon my making a literary career, and though he was very far from lacking sympathy with the workingman —I rather think that he was the one link between the upper and lower strata in our town in that way, enjoying the most hearty respect of both—yet it was a sad disappointment to him. It was in 1893, when I saw him for the last time, that I found it out, by a chance remark he dropped when

sitting with my first book, "How the Other Half Lives," in his hand, and also the sacrifice he had made of his own literary ambitions to eke out by hack editorial work on the local newspaper a living for his large family. As for me, I would have been repaid for the labor of writing a thousand books by witnessing the pride he took in mine. There was at last a man of letters in the family, though he came by a road not down on the official map.

Crying over spilt milk was not my father's fashion, however. If I was to be a carpenter, there was a good one in town, to whom I was forthwith apprenticed for a year. During that time, incidentally, I might make up my mind, upon the evidence of my reduced standing, that school was, after all, to be preferred. And thus it was that I came to be a working boy helping build her proud father's factory at the time I fell head over heels in love with sweet Elizabeth. Certainly I had taken no easy road to the winning of my way and my bride; so reasoned the town, which presently took note of my infatuation. But, then, it laughed, there was time enough. I was fifteen and she was not thirteen. There was time enough, oh, yes! Only I did not think so. My courtship proceeded at a tumultuous pace, which first made the town laugh, then put it out of patience and made some staid matrons express the desire to box my ears soundly. It must be owned that if courting were generally done on the plan I adopted, there would be little peace and

less safety all around. When she came playing among the lumber where we were working, as she naturally would, danger dogged my steps. I carry a scar on the shin-bone made with an adze I should have been minding when I was looking after her. The forefinger on my left hand has a stiff joint. I cut that off with an axe when she was dancing on a beam close by. Though it was put on again by a clever surgeon and kept on, I have never had the use of it since. But what did a finger matter, or ten, when she was only there! Once I fell off the roof when I must crane my neck to see her go around the corner. But I hardly took note of those things, except to enlist her sympathy by posing as a wounded hero with my arm in a sling at the dancing-school which I had joined on purpose to dance with her. I was the biggest boy there, and therefore first to choose a partner, and I remember even now the snickering of the school when I went right over and took Elizabeth. She flushed angrily, but I didn't care. That was what I was there for, and I had her now. I didn't let her go again, either, though the teacher delicately hinted that we were not a good match. She was the best dancer in the school, and I was the worst. Not a good match, hey! That was as much as she knew about it.

It was at the ball that closed the dancing-school that I excited the strong desire of the matrons to box my ears by ordering Elizabeth's father off the floor when he tried to join in before midnight, the time set for the elders to take charge. I was floor

committee, but how I could do such a thing passes my understanding, except on the principle laid down by Mr. Dooley that when a man is in love he is looking for fight all around. I must have been, for they had to hold me back by main strength from running away to the army that was fighting a losing fight with two Great Powers that winter. Though I was far under age, I was a big boy, and might have passed; but the hasty retreat of our brave little band before overwhelming odds settled it. With the echoes of the scandal caused by the ball episode still ringing, I went off to Copenhagen to serve out my apprenticeship there with a great builder whose name I saw among the dead in the paper only the other day. He was ever a good friend to me.

The third day after I reached the capital, which happened to be my birthday, I had appointed a meeting with my student brother at the art exhibition in the palace of Charlottenborg. I found two stairways running up from the main entrance, and was debating in my mind which to take, when a handsome gentleman in a blue overcoat asked, with a slight foreign accent, if he could help me. I told him my trouble, and we went up together.

We walked slowly and carried on quite an animated conversation; that is to say, I did. His part of it was confined mostly to questions, which I was no way loth to answer. I told him about myself and my plans; about the old school, and about my father, whom I took it for granted he knew; for was he not the oldest teacher in the

school, and the wisest, as all Ribe could testify? He listened to it all with a curious little smile, and nodded in a very pleasant and sympathetic way which I liked to see. I told him so, and that I liked the people of Copenhagen well; they seemed so kind to a stranger, and he put his hand on my arm and patted it in a friendly manner that was altogether nice. So we arrived together at the door where the red lackey stood.

He bowed very deep as we entered, and I bowed back, and told my friend that there was an example of it; for I had never seen the man before. At which he laughed outright, and, pointing to a door, said I would find my brother in there, and bade me good-bye. He was gone before I could shake hands with him; but just then my brother came up, and I forgot about him in my admiration of the pictures.

We were resting in one of the rooms an hour later, and I was going over the events of the day, telling all about the kind stranger, when in he came, and nodded, smiling at me.

"There he is," I cried, and nodded, too. To my surprise, Sophus got up with a start and salaamed in haste.

"Good gracious!" he said, when the stranger was gone. "You don't mean to say he was your guide? Why, that was the King, boy!"

I was never so astonished in my life and expect never to be again. I had only known kings from Hans Christian Andersen's story books, where they always went in coronation robes, with long

train and pages, and with gold crowns on their heads. That a king could go around in a blue overcoat, like any other man, was a real shock to me that I didn't get over for a while. But when I got to know more of King Christian, I liked him all the better for it. You couldn't help that anyhow. His people call him "the good king" with cause. He is that.

Speaking of Hans Christian Andersen, we boys loved him as a matter of course; for had he not told us all the beautiful stories that made the whole background of our lives? They do that yet with me, more than you would think. The little Christmas tree and the hare that made it weep by jumping over it because it was so small, belong to the things that come to stay with you always. I hear of people nowadays who think it is not proper to tell children fairy stories. I am sorry for those children. I wonder what they will give them instead. Algebra, perhaps. Nice lot of counting machines we shall have running the century that is to come! But though we loved Andersen, we were not above playing our pranks upon him when occasion offered. In those days Copenhagen was girt about with great earthen walls, and there were beautiful walks up there under the old lindens. On moonlight nights when the smell of violets was in the air, we would sometimes meet the poet there, walking alone. Then we would string out irreverently in Indian file and walk up, cap in hand, one after another, to salute him with a deeply respectful "Good evening,

Herr Professor!" That was his title. His kind face would beam with delight, and our proffered fists would be buried in the very biggest hand, it seemed to us, that mortal ever owned—Andersen had very large hands and feet—and we would go away gleefully chuckling and withal secretly ashamed of ourselves. He was in such evident delight at our homage.

They used to tell a story of Andersen at the time that made the whole town laugh in its sleeve, though there was not a bit of malice in it. No one had anything but the sincerest affection for the poet in my day; his storm and stress period was then long past. He was, it was said, greatly afraid of being buried alive. So that it might not happen, he carefully pinned a paper to his blanket every night before he went to sleep, on which was written, "I guess I am only in a trance." Needless to say, he was in no danger. When he fell into his long sleep, the whole country, for that matter the whole world, stood weeping at his bier.

JACOB RIIS.

THE PILLAR OF THE CLOUD

LEAD, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
  Lead Thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home—
  Lead Thou me on!
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene,—one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
  Shouldst lead me on.
I loved to choose and see my path; but now
  Lead Thou me on!
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,
Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
  Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
  The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

ABIDE WITH ME

ABIDE with me! Fast falls the eventide;
  The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide!
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away:
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!

Not a brief glance I beg, a passing word,
But as Thou dwell'st with Thy disciples, Lord,
Familiar, condescending, patient, free,
Come, not to sojourn, but abide, with me!

Come not in terrors, as the King of kings;
But kind and good, with healing in Thy wings:
Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea:—
Come, Friend of sinners, and thus bide with me!

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile,
And, though rebellious and perverse meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee.
On to the close, O Lord, abide with me!

I need Thy presence every passing hour:
What but Thy grace can foil the Tempter's power?
Who like Thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, O abide with me!

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless:
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is Death's sting? where, Grave, thy victory?
—I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee:—
In life and death, O Lord, abide with me!

HENRY FRANCIS LYTE.

ON A PIECE OF CHALK

A Lecture to the Working Men of Norwich, England

IF A well were to be sunk at our feet in the midst of the city of Norwich, the diggers would very soon find themselves at work in that white substance almost too soft to be called rock, with which we are all familiar as "chalk."

Not only here, but over the whole county of Norfolk, the well-sinker might carry his shaft down many hundred feet without coming to the end of the chalk; and on the seacoast, where the waves have pared away the face of the land which breasts them, the scarped faces of the high cliffs are often wholly formed of the same material. Northward the chalk may be followed as far as Yorkshire; on the south coast it appears abruptly in the picturesque western bays of Dorset, and breaks into the Needles of the Isle of Wight; while on the shores of Kent it supplies that long line of white cliffs to which England owes her name of Albion.

Were the thin soil which covers it all washed away, a curved band of white chalk, here broader

and there narrower, might be followed diagonally across England from Lulworth in Dorset to Flamborough Head in Yorkshire—a distance of over 280 miles as the crow flies.

From this band to the North Sea, on the east, and the Channel, on the south, the chalk is largely hidden by other deposits; but, except in the Weald of Kent and Sussex, it enters into the very foundation of all the southeastern counties.

Attaining, as it does in some places, a thickness of more than a thousand feet, the English chalk must be admitted to be a mass of considerable magnitude. Nevertheless, it covers but an insignificant portion of the whole area occupied by the chalk formation of the globe, which has precisely the same general characters as ours, and is found in detached patches, some less and others more extensive than the English.

Chalk occurs in northwest Ireland; it stretches over a large part of France,—the chalk which underlies Paris being, in fact, a continuation of that of the London basin; it runs through Denmark and Central Europe, and extends southward to North Africa; while eastward, it appears in the Crimea and in Syria, and may be traced as far as the shores of the Sea of Aral, in Central Asia.

If all the points at which true chalk occurs were circumscribed, they would lie within an irregular oval about three thousand miles in long diameter; the area of which would be as great as that of Europe, and would many times exceed that of the largest existing inland sea—the Mediterranean.

Thus the chalk is no unimportant element in the masonry of the earth's crust, and it impresses a peculiar stamp, varying with the conditions to which it is exposed, on the scenery of the districts in which it occurs. The undulating downs and rounded coombs, covered with sweet-grassed turf, of our inland chalk country have a peacefully domestic and mutton-suggesting prettiness, but can hardly be called either grand or beautiful. But on our southern coasts, the wall-sided cliffs, many hundred feet high, with vast needles and pinnacles standing out in the sea, sharp and solitary enough to serve as perches for the wary cormorant, confer a wonderful beauty and grandeur upon the chalk headlands. And, in the East, chalk has its share in the formation of some of the most venerable of mountain ranges, such as the Lebanon.

What is this widespread component of the surface of the earth? and whence did it come?

You may think this no very hopeful inquiry. You may not unnaturally suppose that the attempt to solve such problems as these can lead to no result, save that of entangling the inquirer in vague speculations, incapable of refutation and of verification.

If such were really the case, I should have selected some other subject than a "piece of chalk" for my discourse. But, in truth, after much deliberation I have been unable to think of any topic which would so well enable me to lead you

to see how solid is the foundation upon which some of the most startling conclusions of physical science rest.

A great chapter of the history of the world is written in the chalk. Few passages in the history of man can be supported by such an overwhelming mass of direct and indirect evidence as that which testifies to the truth of the fragment of the history of the globe, which I hope to enable you to read with your own eyes to-night.

Let me add that few chapters of human history have a more profound significance for ourselves. I weigh my words well when I assert that the man who should know the true history of the bit of chalk which every carpenter carries about in his breeches-pocket though ignorant of all other history, is likely, if he will think his knowledge out to its ultimate results, to have a truer, and therefore a better, conception of this wonderful universe and of man's relation to it, than the most learned student who is deep-read in the records of humanity and ignorant of those of Nature.

The language of the chalk is not hard to learn, not nearly so hard as Latin, if you only want to get at the broad features of the story it has to tell; and I propose that we now set to work to spell that story out together.

We all know that if we "burn" chalk the result is quicklime. Chalk, in fact, is a compound of carbonic acid gas and lime, and when you make it very hot the carbonic acid flies away, and the lime is left.

By this method of procedure we see the lime, but we do not see the carbonic acid. If, on the other hand, you were to powder a little chalk and drop it into a good deal of strong vinegar, there would be a great bubbling and fizzing and, finally, a clear liquid, in which no sign of chalk would appear. Here you see the carbonic acid in the bubbles; the lime, dissolved in the vinegar, vanishes from sight. There are a great many other ways of showing that chalk is essentially nothing but carbonic acid and quicklime. Chemists enunciate the result of all the experiments which prove this, by stating that chalk is almost wholly composed of "carbonate of lime."

It is desirable for us to start from the knowledge of this fact, though it may not seem to help us very far towards what we seek. For carbonate of lime is a widely spread substance, and is met with under very various conditions. All sorts of limestones are composed of more or less pure carbonate of lime. The crust which is often deposited by waters which have drained through limestone rocks, in the form of what are called stalagmites and stalactites, is carbonate of lime. Or, to take a more familiar example, the fur on the inside of a tea-kettle is carbonate of lime; and, for anything chemistry tells us to the contrary, the chalk might be a kind of gigantic fur upon the bottom of the earth-kettle, which is kept pretty hot below.

Let us try another method of making the chalk tell us its own history. To the unassisted eye

chalk looks simply like a very loose and open kind of stone. But it is possible to grind a slice of chalk down so thin that you can see through it —until it is thin enough, in fact, to be examined with any magnifying power that may be thought desirable. A thin slice of the fur of a kettle might be made in the same way. If it were examined microscopically, it would show itself to be a more or less distinctly laminated mineral substance, and nothing more.

But the slice of chalk presents a totally different appearance when placed under the microscope. The general mass of it is made up of very minute granules; but embedded in this matrix, are innumerable bodies, some smaller and some larger, but, on a rough average, not more than a hundredth of an inch in diameter, having a well-defined shape and structure. A cubic inch of some specimens of chalk may contain hundreds of thousands of these bodies, compacted together with incalculable millions of the granules.

The examination of a transparent slice gives a good notion of the manner in which the components of the chalk are arranged, and of their relative proportions. But by rubbing up some chalk with a brush in water and then pouring off the milky fluid, so as to obtain sediments of different degrees of fineness, the granules and the minute rounded bodies may be pretty well separated from one another, and submitted to microscopic examination, either as opaque or as transparent objects. By combining the views

obtained in these various methods, each of the rounded bodies may be proved to be a beautifully constructed calcareous fabric, made up of a number of chambers, communicating freely with one another. The chambered bodies are of various forms. One of the commonest is something like a badly grown raspberry, being formed of a number of nearly globular chambers of different sizes congregated together. It is called *Globigerina*, and some specimens of chalk consist of little else than *Globigerinæ* and granules.

Let us fix our attention upon the *Globigerina*. It is the spoor of the game we are tracking. If we can learn what it is and what are the conditions of its existence, we shall see our way to the origin and past history of the chalk.

A suggestion which may naturally enough present itself is, that these curious bodies are the result of some process of aggregation which has taken place in the carbonate of lime; that, just as in winter, the rime on our windows simulates the most delicate and elegantly arborescent foliage, —proving that the mere mineral water may, under certain conditions, assume the outward form of organic bodies,—so this mineral substance, carbonate of lime, hidden away in the bowels of the earth, has taken the shape of these chambered bodies. I am not raising a merely fanciful and unreal objection. Very learned men, in former days, have even entertained the notion that all the formed things found in rocks are of this nature; and if no such conception is at present held

to be admissible, it is because long and varied experience has now shown that mineral matter never does assume the form and structure we find in fossils. If any one were to try to persuade you that an oyster-shell (which is also chiefly composed of carbonate of lime) had crystallized out of sea-water, I suppose you would laugh at the absurdity. Your laughter would be justified by the fact that all experience tends to show that oyster-shells are formed by the agency of oysters, and in no other way. And if there were no better reasons, we should be justified, on like grounds, in believing that *Globigerina* is not the product of anything but vital activity.

Happily, however, better evidence in proof of the organic nature of the *Globigerinæ* than that of analogy is forthcoming. It so happens that calcareous skeletons, exactly similar to the *Globigerinæ* of the chalk, are being formed, at the present moment, by minute living creatures, which flourish in multitudes, literally more numerous than the sands of the seashore, over a large extent of that part of the earth's surface which is covered by the ocean.

The history of the discovery of these living *Globigerinæ*, and of the part which they play in rock building, is singular enough. It is a discovery which, like others of no less scientific importance, has arisen, incidentally, out of work devoted to very different and exceedingly practical interests.

When men first took to the sea, they speedily

learned to look out for shoals and rocks; and the more the burthen of their ships increased, the more imperatively necessary it became for sailors to ascertain with precision the depth of the waters they traversed. Out of this necessity grew the use of the lead and sounding line; and, ultimately, marine surveying, which is the recording of the form of coasts and of the depth of the sea, as ascertained by the sounding-lead, upon charts.

At the same time, it became desirable to ascertain and to indicate the nature of the sea-bottom, since this circumstance greatly affects its goodness as holding ground for anchors. Some ingenious tar, whose name deserves a better fate than the oblivion into which it has fallen, attained this object by "arming" the bottom of the lead with a lump of grease, to which more or less of the sand or mud, or broken shells, as the case might be, adhered, and was brought to the surface. But however well adapted such an apparatus might be for rough nautical purposes, scientific accuracy could not be expected from the armed lead, and to remedy its defects (especially when applied to sounding in great depths) Lieutenant Brooke, of the American Navy, some years ago invented a most ingenious machine, by which a considerable portion of the superficial layer of the sea-bottom can be scooped out and brought up from any depth to which the lead descends.

In 1853 Lieutenant Brooke obtained mud from the bottom of the North Atlantic, between Newfoundland and the Azores, at a depth of more than

10,000 feet, or two miles, by the help of this sounding apparatus. The specimens were sent for examination to Ehrenberg of Berlin and to Bailey of West Point, and those able microscopists found that this deep-sea mud was almost entirely composed of the skeletons of living organisms—the greater proportion of these being just like the *Globigerinæ* already known to occur in the chalk.

Thus far, the work had been carried on simply in the interests of science, but Lieutenant Brooke's method of sounding acquired a high commercial value, when the enterprise of laying down the telegraph cable between this country and the United States was undertaken. For it became a matter of immense importance to know, not only the depth of the sea over the whole line along which the cable was to be laid, but the exact nature of the bottom, so as to guard against chances of cutting or fraying the strands of that costly rope. The Admiralty consequently ordered Captain Dayman, an old friend and shipmate of mine, to ascertain the depth over the whole line of the cable and to bring back specimens of the bottom. In former days such a command as this might have sounded very much like one of the impossible things which the young prince in the fairy tales is ordered to do before he can obtain the hand of the princess. However, in the months of June and July, 1857, my friend performed the task assigned to him with great expedition and precision, without, so far as I know, having met with any reward of that kind. The specimens of At-

lantic mud which he procured were sent to me to be examined and reported upon.

The result of all these operations is, that we know the contours and the nature of the surface soil, covered by the North Atlantic for a distance of 1,700 miles from east to west, as well as we know that of any part of the dry land.

It is a prodigious plain—one of the widest and most even plains in the world. If the sea were drained off, you might drive a wagon all the way from Valentia, on the west coast of Ireland, to Trinity Bay, in Newfoundland. And, except upon one sharp incline about 200 miles from Valentia, I am not quite sure that it would even be necessary to put the skid on, so gentle are the ascents and descents upon that long route. From Valentia the road would lie down-hill for about 200 miles to the point at which the bottom is now covered by 1700 fathoms of sea-water. Then would come the central plain, more than a thousand miles wide, the inequalities of the surface of which would be hardly perceptible, though the depth of water upon it now varies from 10,000 to 15,000 feet; and there are places in which Mont Blanc might be sunk without showing its peak above water. Beyond this, the ascent on the American side commences and gradually leads, for about 300 miles, to the Newfoundland shore.

Almost the whole of the bottom of this central plain (which extends for many hundred miles in a north and south direction) is covered by a fine mud, which, when brought to the surface, dries

into a grayish white friable substance. You can write with this on a blackboard, if you are so inclined; and, to the eye, it is quite like very soft, grayish chalk. Examined chemically, it proves to be composed almost wholly of carbonate of lime; and if you make a section of it, in the same way as that of the piece of chalk was made, and view it with the microscope, it presents innumerable *Globigerinæ* embedded in a granular matrix.

Thus this deep-sea mud is substantially chalk. I say substantially, because there are a good many minor differences; but as these have no bearing on the question immediately before us,—which is the nature of the *Globigerinæ* of the chalk,—it is unnecessary to speak of them.

Globigerinæ of every size, from the smallest to the largest, are associated together in the Atlantic mud, and the chambers of many are filled by a soft animal matter. This soft substance is, in fact, the remains of the creature to which the *Globigerina* shell, or rather skeleton, owes its existence—and which is an animal of the simplest imaginable description. It is, in fact, a mere particle of living jelly, without defined parts of any kind—without a mouth, nerves, muscles, or distinct organs, and only manifesting its vitality to ordinary observation by thrusting out and retracting from all parts of its surface long filamentous processes, which serve for arms and legs. Yet this amorphous particle, devoid of everything which, in the higher animals, we call organs, is

capable of feeding, growing, and multiplying; of separating from the ocean the small proportion of carbonate of lime which is dissolved in sea-water; and of building up that substance into a skeleton for itself, according to a pattern which can be imitated by no other known agency.

The notion that animals can live and flourish in the sea, at the vast depths from which apparently living *Globigerinæ* have been brought up does not agree very well with our usual conceptions respecting the conditions of animal life; and it is not so absolutely impossible, as it might at first sight appear to be, that the *Globigerinæ* of the Atlantic sea-bottom do not live and die where they are found.

As I have mentioned, the soundings from the great Atlantic plain are almost entirely made up of *Globigerinæ*, with the granules which have been mentioned, and some few other calcareous shells; but a small percentage of the chalky mud—perhaps at most some 5 per cent. of it—is of a different nature, and consists of shells and skeletons composed of silex, or pure flint. These silicious bodies belong partly to the lowly vegetable organisms which are called *Diatomaceæ*, and partly to the minute and extremely simple animals termed *Radiolaria*. It is quite certain that these creatures do not live at the bottom of the ocean, but at its surface—where they may be obtained in prodigious numbers by the use of a properly constructed net. Hence it follows that these silicious organisms, though they are not heavier than the lightest

dust, must have fallen, in some cases, through fifteen thousand feet of water, before they reached their final resting-place on the ocean floor. And, considering how large a surface these bodies expose in proportion to their weight, it is probable that they occupy a great length of time in making their burial journey from the surface of the Atlantic to the bottom.

But if the *Radiolaria* and Diatoms are thus rained upon the bottom of the sea, from the superficial layer of its waters in which they pass their lives, it is obviously possible that the *Globigerinæ* may be similarly derived; and if they were so, it would be much more easy to understand how they obtain their supply of food than it is at present. Nevertheless, the positive and negative evidence all points the other way. The skeletons of the full-grown, deep-sea *Globigerinæ* are so remarkably solid and heavy in proportion to their surface as to seem little fitted for floating; and, as a matter of fact, they are not to be found along with the Diatoms and *Radiolaria* in the uppermost stratum of the open ocean.

It has been observed, again, that the abundance of *Globigerinæ* in proportion to other organisms of like kind, increases with the depth of the sea, and that deep-water *Globigerinæ* are larger than those which live in shallower parts of the sea; and such facts negative the supposition that these organisms have been swept by currents from the shallows into the deeps of the Atlantic.

It therefore seems to be hardly doubtful that

these wonderful creatures live and die at the depths in which they are found.

However, the important points for us are that the living *Globigerinæ* are exclusively marine animals, the skeletons of which abound at the bottom of deep seas; and that there is not a shadow of reason for believing that the habits of the *Globigerinæ* of the chalk differed from those of the existing species. But if this be true, there is no escaping the conclusion that the chalk itself is the dried mud of an ancient deep sea.

In working over the soundings collected by Captain Dayman, I was surprised to find that many of what I have called the "granules" of that mud, were not, as one might have been tempted to think at first, the mere powder and waste of *Globigerinæ*, but that they had a definite form and size. I termed these bodies "*coccoliths*," and doubted their organic nature. Doctor Wallich verified my observation, and added the interesting discovery that, not unfrequently, bodies similar to these "coccoliths," were aggregated together into spheroids, which he termed "*coccospheres*." So far as we knew, these bodies, the nature of which is extremely puzzling and problematical, were peculiar to the Atlantic soundings.

But a few years ago Mr. Sorby, in making a careful examination of the chalk by means of thin sections and otherwise, observed, as Ehrenberg had done before him, that much of its granular basis possesses a definite form. Comparing these formed particles with those in the Atlantic sound-

ings, he found the two to be identical; and thus proved that the chalk, like the soundings, contains these mysterious coccoliths and coccospheres. Here was a further and most interesting confirmation, from internal evidence, of the essential identity of the chalk with modern deep-sea mud. *Globigerinæ*, coccoliths, and coccospheres are found as the chief constituents of both, and testify to the general similarity of the conditions under which both have been formed.

The evidence furnished by the hewing, facing, and superposition of the stones of the Pyramids, that these structures were built by men, has no greater weight than the evidence that the chalk was built by *Globigerinæ;* and the belief that those ancient pyramid-builders were terrestrial and air-breathing creatures like ourselves,—is it better based than the conviction that the chalk-makers lived in the sea?

But as our belief in the building of the Pyramids by men is not only grounded on the internal evidence afforded by these structures, but gathers strength from multitudinous collateral proofs, and is clinched by the total absence of any reason for a contrary belief; so the evidence drawn from the *Globigerinæ* that the chalk is an ancient sea-bottom is fortified by innumerable independent lines of evidence; and our belief in the truth of the conclusion to which all positive testimony tends receives the like negative justification from the fact that no other hypothesis has a shadow of foundation.

It may be worth while briefly to consider a few of these collateral proofs that the chalk was deposited at the bottom of the sea.

The great mass of the chalk is composed, as we have seen, of the skeletons of *Globigerinæ*, and other simple organisms, embedded in granular matter. Here and there, however, this hardened mud of the ancient sea reveals the remains of higher animals which have lived and died, and left their hard parts in the mud, just as the oysters die and leave their shells behind them in the mud of the present seas.

There are, at the present day, certain groups of animals which are never found in fresh waters, being unable to live anywhere but in the sea. Such are the corals; those corallines which are called *Polyzoa;* those creatures which fabricate the lamp-shells, and are called *Brachiopoda;* the pearly *Nautilus*, and all animals allied to it; and all the forms of sea-urchins and star-fishes.

Not only are all these creatures confined to salt water at the present day, but, so far as our records of the past go, the conditions of their existence have been the same; hence their occurrence in any deposit is as strong evidence as can be obtained that that deposit was formed in the sea. Now the remains of animals of all the kinds which have been enumerated occur in the chalk in greater or less abundance, while not one of those forms of shellfish which are characteristic of fresh water has yet been observed in it.

When we consider that the remains of more

than three thousand distinct species of aquatic animals have been discovered among the fossils of the chalk, that the great majority of them are of such forms as are now met with only in the sea, and that there is no reason to believe that any one of them inhabited fresh water—the collateral evidence that the chalk represents an ancient sea bottom acquires as great force as the proof derived from the nature of the chalk itself. I think you will now allow that I did not overstate my case when I asserted that we have as strong grounds for believing that all the vast area of dry land at present occupied by the chalk was once at the bottom of the sea, as we have for any matter of history whatever; while there is no justification for any other belief.

No less certain it is that the time during which the countries we now call southeast England, France, Germany, Poland, Russia, Egypt, Arabia, Syria, were more or less completely covered by a deep sea, was of considerable duration.

We have already seen that the chalk is, in places, more than a thousand feet thick. I think you will agree with me that it must have taken some time for the skeletons of animalcules of a hundredth of an inch in diameter to heap up such a mass as that. I have said that throughout the thickness of the chalk the remains of other animals are scattered. These remains are often in the most exquisite state of preservation. The valves of the shell-fishes are commonly adherent; the long spines of some of the sea-urchins, which

would be detached by the smallest jar, often remain in their places. In a word, it is certain that these animals have lived and died when the place which they now occupy was the surface of as much of the chalk as had then been deposited and that each has been covered up by the layer of *Globigerina* mud upon which the creatures embedded a little higher up have, in like manner, lived and died. But some of these remains prove the existence of reptiles of vast size in the chalk sea. These lived their time, and had their ancestors and descendants, which assuredly implies time, reptiles being of slow growth.

There is more curious evidence, again, that the process of covering up, or, in other words, the deposit of *Globigerina* skeletons, did not go on very fast. It is demonstrable that an animal of the cretaceous sea might die, that its skeleton might lie uncovered upon the sea-bottom long enough to lose all its outward coverings and appendages by putrefaction, and that, after this had happened, another animal might attach itself to the dead and naked skeleton, might grow to maturity, and might itself die before the calcareous mud had buried the whole.

Cases of this kind are admirably described by Sir Charles Lyell. He speaks of the frequency with which geologists find in the chalk a fossilized sea-urchin to which is attached the lower valve of a *Crania*. This is a kind of shell-fish, with a shell composed of two pieces, of which, as in the oyster, one is fixed and the other free.

"The upper valve is almost invariably wanting, though occasionally found in a perfect state of preservation in the white chalk at some distance. In this case, we see clearly that the sea-urchin first lived from youth to age, then died and lost its spines, which were carried away. Then the young *Crania* adhered to the bared shell, grew and perished in its turn; after which, the upper valve was separated from the lower, before the Echinus became enveloped in chalky mud."

A specimen in the Museum of Practical Geology, in London, still further prolongs the period which must have elapsed between the death of the sea-urchin and its burial by the *Globigerinæ*. For the outward face of the valve of a *Crania*, which is attached to a sea-urchin (*Micraster*), is itself overrun by an incrusting coralline, which spreads thence over more or less of the surface of the sea-urchin. It follows that, after the upper valve of the *Crania* fell off, the surface of the attached valve must have remained exposed long enough to allow of the growth of the whole coralline, since corallines do not live embedded in mud.

The progress of knowledge may, one day, enable us to deduce from such facts as these the maximum rate at which the chalk can have accumulated, and thus to arrive at the minimum duration of the chalk period. Suppose that the valve of the *Crania* upon which a coralline has fixed itself in the way just described, is so attached to the sea-urchin that no part of it is more than an inch above the face upon which the sea-urchin

rests. Then, as the coralline could not have fixed itself, if the *Crania* had been covered up with chalk mud, and could not have lived had itself been so covered, it follows that an inch of chalk mud could not have accumulated within the time between the death and decay of the soft parts of the sea-urchin and the growth of the coralline to the full size which it has attained. If the decay of the soft parts of the sea-urchin, the attachment, growth to maturity, and decay of the *Crania*, and the subsequent attachment and growth of the coralline, took a year (which is a low estimate enough), the accumulation of the inch of chalk must have taken more than a year; and the deposit of a thousand feet of chalk must, consequently, have taken more than twelve thousand years.

The foundation of all this calculation is, of course, a knowledge of the length of time the *Crania* and the coralline needed to attain their full size; and, on this head, precise knowledge is at present wanting. But there are circumstances which tend to show that nothing like an inch of chalk has accumulated during the life of a *Crania;* and, on any probable estimate of the length of that life, the chalk period must have had a much longer duration than that thus roughly assigned to it.

Thus, not only is it certain that the chalk is the mud of an ancient sea-bottom, but it is no less certain that the chalk sea existed during an extremely long period, though we may not be pre-

pared to give a precise estimate of the length of that period in years. The relative duration is clear, though the absolute duration may not be definable. The attempt to affix any precise date, to the period at which the chalk sea began, or ended, its existence is baffled by difficulties of the same kind. But the relative age of the cretaceous epoch may be determined with as great ease and certainty as the long duration of that epoch.

You will have heard of the interesting discoveries recently made in various parts of Western Europe of flint implements, obviously worked into shape by human hands, under circumstances which show conclusively that man is a very ancient denizen of these regions.

It has been proved that the old populations of Europe, whose existence has been revealed to us in this way, consisted of savages, such as the Esquimaux are now; that, in the country which is now France, they hunted the reindeer, and were familiar with the ways of the mammoth and the bison. The physical geography of France was in those days different from what it is now—the river Somme, for instance, having cut its bed a hundred feet deeper between that time and this; and it is probable that the climate was more like that of Canada or Siberia than that of Western Europe.

The existence of these people is forgotten even in the traditions of the oldest historical nations. The name and fame of them had utterly vanished until a few years back; and the amount of physical change which has been effected since their day

renders it more than probable that, venerable as are some of the historical nations, the workers of the chipped flints of Hoxne or of Amiens are to them, as they are to us, in point of antiquity.

But, if we assign to these hoar relics of long-vanished generations of men the greatest age that can possibly be claimed for them, they are not older than the drift, or boulder clay, which, in comparison with the chalk, is but a very juvenile deposit. You need go no farther than your own seaboard for evidence of this fact. At one of the most charming spots on the coast of Norfolk, Cromer, you will see the boulder clay forming a vast mass, which lies upon the chalk and must consequently have come into existence after it. Huge boulders of chalk are, in fact, included in the clay, and have evidently been brought to the position they now occupy, by the same agency as that which has planted blocks of syenite from Norway side by side with them.

The chalk, then, is certainly older than the boulder clay. If you ask how much, I will again take you no farther than the same spot upon your own coasts for evidence. I have spoken of the boulder clay and drift as resting upon the chalk. That is not strictly true. Interposed between the chalk and the drift is a comparatively insignificant layer containing vegetable matter. But that layer tells a wonderful history. It is full of stumps of trees, standing as they grew. Fir trees are there with their cones, and hazel bushes with their nuts; there stand the stools of oak and

yew trees, beeches and alders. Hence this stratum is appropriately called the "forest bed."

It is obvious that the chalk must have been upheaved and converted into dry land before the timber trees could grow upon it. As the boles of some of these trees are from two to three feet in diameter, it is no less clear that the dry land thus formed remained in the same condition for long ages. And not only do the remains of stately oaks and well-grown firs testify to the duration of this condition of things, but additional evidence to the same effect is afforded by the abundant remains of elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, and other great wild beasts, which it has yielded to the zealous search of such men as the Rev. Mr. Gunn.

When you look at such a collection as he has formed, and bethink you that these elephantine bones did veritably carry their owners about, and these great grinders crunch, in the dark woods of which the forest bed is now the only trace, it is impossible not to feel that they are as good evidence of the lapse of time as the annual rings of the tree stumps.

Thus there is a writing upon the wall of cliffs at Cromer, and whoso runs may read it. It tells us, with an authority which cannot be impeached, that the ancient sea-bed of the chalk sea was raised up, and remained dry land, until it was covered with forest, stocked with the great game whose spoils have rejoiced your geologists. How long it remained in that condition cannot be said,

but "the whirligig of time brought its revenges" in those days as in these. That dry land, with the bones and teeth of generations of long-lived elephants, hidden away among the gnarled roots and dry leaves of its ancient trees, sank gradually to the bottom of the icy sea, which covered it with huge masses of drift and boulder clay. Sea-beasts, such as the walrus, now restricted to the extreme north, paddled about where birds had twittered among the topmost twigs of the fir trees. How long this state of things endured we know not, but at length it came to an end. The upheaved glacial mud hardened into the soil of modern Norfolk. Forests grew once more, the wolf and the beaver replaced the reindeer and the elephant, and at length what we call the history of England dawned.

Thus you have, within the limits of your own county, proof that the chalk can justly claim a very much greater antiquity than even the oldest physical traces of mankind. But we may go further and demonstrate, by evidence of the same authority as that which testifies to the existence of the father of men, that the chalk is vastly older than Adam himself.

The Book of Genesis informs us that Adam, immediately upon his creation, and before the appearance of Eve, was placed in the Garden of Eden. The problem of the geographical position of Eden has greatly vexed the spirits of the learned in such matters, but there is one point respecting which, so far as I know, no commentator has ever raised a doubt. This is, that of the four rivers

which are said to run out of it, Euphrates and Hiddekel are identical with the rivers now known by the names of Euphrates and Tigris.

But the whole country in which these mighty rivers take their origin, and through which they run, is composed of rocks which are either of the same age as the chalk or of later date. So that the chalk must not only have been formed, but, after its formation, the time required for the deposit of these later rocks and for their upheaval into dry land must have elapsed before the smallest brook which feeds the swift stream of "the great river, the river of Babylon," began to flow.

Thus, evidence which cannot be rebutted, and which need not be strengthened, though if time permitted I might indefinitely increase its quantity, compels you to believe that the earth, from the time of the chalk to the present day, has been the theater of a series of changes as vast in their amount as they were slow in their progress. The area on which we stand has been first sea and then land, for at least four alternations; and has remained in each of these conditions for a period of great length.

Nor have these wonderful metamorphoses of sea into land, and of land into sea, been confined to one corner of England. During the chalk period, or "cretaceous epoch," not one of the present great physical features of the globe was in existence. Our great mountain ranges, Pyrenees, Alps, Himalayas, Andes, have all been upheaved since

the chalk was deposited, and the cretaceous sea flowed over the sites of Sinai and Ararat.

All this is certain, because rocks of cretaceous, or still later, date have shared in the elevatory movements which gave rise to these mountain chains, and may be found perched up, in some cases, many thousand feet high upon their flanks. And evidence of equal cogency demonstrates that, though in Norfolk the forest bed rests directly upon the chalk, yet it does so, not because the period at which the forest grew immediately followed that at which the chalk was formed, but because an immense lapse of time, represented elsewhere by thousands of feet of rock, is not indicated at Cromer.

I must ask you to believe that there is no less conclusive proof that a still more prolonged succession of similar changes occurred before the chalk was deposited. Nor have we any reason to think that the first term in the series of these changes is known. The oldest sea-beds preserved to us are sands, and mud, and pebbles, the wear and tear of rocks which were formed in still older oceans.

But great as is the magnitude of these physical changes of the world, they have been accompanied by a no less striking series of modifications in its living inhabitants.

All the great classes of animals, beasts of the field, fowls of the air, creeping things, and things which dwell in the waters, flourished upon the globe long ages before the chalk was deposited. Very few, however, if any, of these ancient forms

of animal life were identical with those which now live. Certainly not one of the higher animals was of the same species as any of those now in existence. The beasts of the field, in the days before the chalk, were not our beasts of the field, nor the fowls of the air such as those which the eye of man has seen flying, unless his antiquity dates infinitely farther back than we at present surmise. If we could be carried back into those times, we should be as one suddenly set down in Australia before it was colonized. We should see mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, insects, snails, and the like, clearly recognizable as such, and yet not one of them would be just the same as those with which we are familiar, and many would be extremely different.

From that time to the present the population of the world has undergone slow and gradual, but incessant, changes. There has been no grand catastrophe—no destroyer has swept away the forms of life of one period, and replaced them by a totally new creation; but one species has vanished and another has taken its place; creatures of one type of structure have diminished, those of another have increased, as time has passed on. And thus, while the differences between the living creatures of the time before the chalk and those of the present day appear startling, if placed side by side, we are led from one to the other by the most gradual progress, if we follow the course of Nature through the whole series of those relics of her operations which she has left behind.

And it is by the population of the chalk sea that the ancient and the modern inhabitants of the world are most completely connected. The groups which are dying out flourish, side by side, with the groups which are now the dominant forms of life.

Thus the chalk contains remains of those strange flying and swimming reptiles, the pterodactyl, the ichthyosaurus, and the plesiosaurus, which are found in no later deposits, but abounded in preceding ages. The chambered shells called ammonites and belemnites, which are so characteristic of the period preceding the cretaceous, in like manner die with it.

But, amongst these fading remainders of a previous state of things are some very modern forms of life, looking like Yankee peddlers among a tribe of red Indians. Crocodiles of modern type appear; bony fishes, many of them very similar to existing species, almost supplant the forms of fish which predominate in more ancient seas; and many kinds of living shellfish first become known to us in the chalk. The vegetation acquires a modern aspect. A few living animals are not even distinguishable as species, from those which existed at that remote epoch. The *Globigerina* of the present day, for example, is not different specifically from that of the chalk; and the same may be said of many other *Foraminifera*. I think it probable that critical and unprejudiced examination will show that more than one species of much higher animals have had a similar longevity; but the only example which I can at present give

confidently is the snake's-head lamp-shell (*Terebratulina caput serpentis*), which lives in our English seas and abounded (as *Terebratulina striata* of authors) in the chalk.

The longest line of human ancestry must hide its diminished head before the pedigree of this insignificant shell-fish. We Englishmen are proud to have an ancestor who was present at the battle of Hastings. The ancestors of *Terebratulina caput serpentis* may have been present at a battle of *Ichthyosauria* in that part of the sea which, when the chalk was forming, flowed over the site of Hastings. While all around has changed, this *Terebratulina* has peacefully propagated its species from generation to generation, and stands to this day as a living testimony to the continuity of the present with the past history of the globe.

Up to this moment I have stated, so far as I know, nothing but well-authenticated facts, and the immediate conclusions which they force upon the mind.

But the mind is so constituted that it does not willingly rest in facts and immediate causes, but seeks always after a knowledge of the remoter links in the chain of causation.

Taking the many changes of any given spot of the earth's surface, from sea to land and from land to sea, as an established fact, we cannot refrain from asking ourselves how these changes have occurred. And when we have explained them—as they must be explained—by the alter-

nate slow movements of elevation and depression which have affected the crust of the earth, we go still farther back and ask, Why these movements?

I am not certain that any one can give you a satisfactory answer to that question. Assuredly I cannot. All that can be said, for certain, is, that such movements are part of the ordinary course of nature, inasmuch as they are going on at the present time. Direct proof may be given that some parts of the land of the northern hemisphere are at this moment insensibly rising and others insensibly sinking; and there is indirect but perfectly satisfactory proof that an enormous area now covered by the Pacific has been deepened thousands of feet since the present inhabitants of that sea came into existence.

Thus there is not a shadow of a reason for believing that the physical changes of the globe, in past times, have been effected by other than natural causes.

Is there any more reason for believing that the concomitant modifications in the forms of the living inhabitants of the globe have been brought about in other ways?

Before attempting to answer this question, let us try to form a distinct mental picture of what has happened in some special case.

The crocodiles are animals which, as a group, have a very vast antiquity. They abounded ages before the chalk was deposited; they throng the rivers in warm climates at the present day. There is a difference in the form of the joints of the back-

bone and in some minor particulars between the crocodiles of the present epoch and those which lived before the chalk; but, in the cretaceous epoch, as I have already mentioned, the crocodiles had assumed the modern type of structure. Notwithstanding this, the crocodiles of the chalk are not identically the same as those which lived in the times called "old tertiary," which succeeded the cretaceous epoch; and the crocodiles of the older tertiaries are not identical with those of the newer tertiaries, nor are these identical with existing forms. I leave open the question whether particular species may have lived on from epoch to epoch. But each epoch has had its peculiar crocodiles; though all, since the chalk, have belonged to the modern type, and differ simply in their proportions, and in such structural particulars as are discernible only to trained eyes.

How is the existence of this long succession of different species of crocodiles to be accounted for?

Only two suppositions seem to be open to us—either each species of crocodile has been specially created, or it has arisen out of some preëxisting form by the operation of natural causes.

Choose your hypothesis; I have chosen mine. I can find no warranty for believing in the distinct creation of a score of successive species of crocodiles in the course of countless ages of time. Science gives no countenance to such a wild fancy; nor can even the perverse ingenuity of a commentator pretend to discover this sense in the simple words in which the writer of Genesis records the proceed-

ings of the fifth and sixth days of the Creation.

On the other hand, I see no good reason for doubting the necessary alternative, that all these varied species have been evolved from preëxisting crocodilian forms, by the operation of causes as completely a part of the common order of nature as those which have effected the changes of the inorganic world.

Few will venture to affirm that the reasoning which applies to crocodiles loses its force among other animals or among plants. If one series of species has come into existence by the operation of natural causes, it seems folly to deny that all may have arisen in the same way.

A small beginning has led us to a great ending. If I were to put the bit of chalk with which we started into the hot but obscure flame of burning hydrogen, it would presently shine like the sun. It seems to me that this physical metamorphosis is no false image of what has been the result of our subjecting it to a jet of fervent, though nowise brilliant, thought to-night. It has become luminous, and its clear rays, penetrating the abyss of the remote past, have brought within our ken some stages of the evolution of the earth. And in the shifting "without haste, but without rest" of the land and sea, as in the endless variation of the forms assumed by living beings, we have observed nothing but the natural product of the forces originally possessed by the substance of the universe.

THOMAS HUXLEY.

REFERRED TO THE AUTHOR*

YES, "Obedience" is a fine play. I'm glad they've revived it. Did you know that the first time it was produced, Morgan Edwards played the part of Dunbar? It's rather an odd story.

I never think of Edwards without remembering the dark, creaky stairs in that boarding house on Seventy-third Street. That was where I first met him. We had a comical habit of always encountering on the stairs. We would pass with that rather ridiculous murmur and sidling obeisance of two people who don't know each other but want to be polite. I was interested in him at once. Even on the shadowy stairway I could see that he had a fine head, and there was something curiously attractive about his pale, preoccupied face. There was a touch of the unworldly about him, and a touch of the tragic, too. You know how you divine things about people. "He has troubles of his own" was the banal phrase that came into my

*From "Tales from a Rolltop Desk," by permission of the author.

mind. Also there was something queerly familiar about him. I wondered if I had seen him before, or only imagined him. I was busy writing, at that time, and my mind was peopled with energetic phantoms. The thought struck me that perhaps he was someone I had invented for a story, but had never given life to. I wondered, was this pale and rather reproachful spectre going to haunt me until the tale was written? At any rate, whatever the story was, I had forgotten it.

One day, as I creaked up the first flight, I saw that he was standing at the head of the stairs, waiting for me to pass. A door was open behind him, and there was light enough to see him clearly. Tall, thin, beautifully shaven on a fine angular jaw that would not be easy to shave, I was surprised to see an air of sudden cheerfulness about him that was almost incongruous. Having thought of him only as a sort of melancholy hallucination living on a dingy stairway, it was quite startling to see him with his face lit up like a lyric poet's, a glow of mundane exhilaration in his eyes. For the first time in our meetings he looked as though to speak to him would not break in upon his secret thoughts. He was the kind of chap, you know, who usually looked as though he was busy thinking. I remember what I said because it was so inane. Some people don't like to cross on the stairs. I looked up as I came to the turn in the steps, and said, "Superstitious?" He smiled and said, "No, I guess not!" "Only in the literal sense, at this moment," I said. An

absurd remark, and a horrible pun which I regretted at once, for I thought I would have to explain it. Nothing more humiliating than having to explain a bad pun. But if I didn't explain it, it would seem rude. He looked puzzled, then his face lit up charmingly. "Superstitious—standing above you, eh? I never thought of the meaning before!"

I came up the last steps. "Pardon the vile pun," I said. Then I knew where I had seen him before, and recognized him. "Aren't you Morgan Edwards?" I asked. "Yes," he said.

"I thought so. I remember you in 'After Dinner.' I wrote the notice in the *Observer*." "By Jove, did you? I *am* glad to meet you. I think that was the nicest thing any one ever said." His gaunt and pensive face showed a quick flash of that direct and honest friendliness which is so appealing. We found that we were both living on the fourth floor. For similar reasons, undoubtedly. I'm afraid he thought, at first, that I was a dramatic critic of standing. Afterward I explained that the "After Dinner" notice had been only a fluke. I was on the *Observer* when the show was put on, and one of the dramatic men happened to be ill.

Wait a minute; give me a chance! I'll tell it exactly as it came to me, in snips and shreds. At first I didn't pay much attention. I had problems of my own that summer. You know what a fourth-floor hall bedroom is in hot weather. I had given up my newspaper job, and was trying

to finish a novel. I couldn't work late at night, when it was cool, because if I kept my typewriter going after nine-thirty the old maid in the next room used to pound on the partition. I didn't get on very well with the work, and the money was running low. Every now and then I would meet Edwards in the hall. He looked ill and worried, and I used to think there was a touching pathos in his careful neatness. My own habits run the other way—my Palm Beach suit was a wreck, I remember—but Edwards was always immaculate. I could see—having made it my business to observe details—how cunningly he had mended his cuffs and soft collars. Poor devil! I used to see him going out about noon, with his cane and Panama hat. I dare say he scrubbed his hat with his toothbrush. Summer is a hard time for an actor who hasn't had a job all spring. Of course there are the pictures, and summer stock, but I gathered that he had been ill, and then had turned down several offers of that sort on account of something coming along that he had great hopes for. I remembered his really outstanding work in "After Dinner," that satiric comedy that fell dead the winter before. Most of the critics gave it a good roasting, but knowing what I do now I expect the real trouble was poor direction. Fagan was the director and what did he know of sophisticated comedy? As I say, I had reviewed the piece for the *Observer*, and had been greatly struck by Edwards's playing. Not a leading part, but exquisitely done.

But just at that time I was absorbed in my own not-too-successful affairs. For several years I had been saying to myself that I would do great stuff if I could only get away from the newspaper grind for a few months. And then, when I had saved up five hundred dollars, and buried myself there on Seventy-third Street to write, I couldn't seem to make any headway. I got half through the novel, and then saw that it was paltry stuff. It was flashy, spurious, and raw. One warm evening I was sitting at my window, smoking mournfully and watching some girls who were laughing and talking in a big apartment house that loomed over our lodgings like an ocean liner beside a tugboat. There was a tap at the door. Edwards asked if he could come in. I was surprised, and pleased. He kept very much to himself.

"Glad to see you," I said. "Sit down and have a pipe."

"I didn't want to intrude," he said. "I just wanted to ask you something. You're a literary man. Do you know anything about Arthur Sampson?"

I had to confess that I had never heard the name. No one had, at that time, you remember.

"He's written a play," Edwards said. "A perfectly lovely piece of work. I've got a part in it. By heaven, it seems too good to be true—after a summer like this: illness, the actors' strike, and all that—to get into something so fine. I've just read the whole script. I'm so keen about it,

I'm eager to know who the author is. I thought perhaps you might know something about him."

"I guess he's a new man," I said. "What's the play called?"

"'Obedience.' You know, I've never had such a stroke of luck—it's as if the part had been written for me."

"Splendid," I said, and I was honestly pleased to hear of his good fortune. "Is it the lead?"

"Oh, no. Of course they want a big name for that. Brooks is the man. My part is only the foil—provides the contrast, you know—on the payroll as well as on the stage." He laughed, a little cynically.

"Who's producing it?"

"Upton."

"You don't mean to tell me Upton's got anything good?" I knew little enough about theatrical matters, but even outsiders know Upton's sort of producing, which mostly consists of musical shows where an atrocious libretto is pulled through by an opulent chorus and plenty of eccentric dancing. "A chorus that outstrips them all" was one of his favourite advertising slogans.

"That's why I was wondering about the author, Sampson. This must be his first, or he'd never have given it to Upton. Or is Upton going to turn over a new leaf?"

"The only leaves Upton is likely to turn over are fig leaves," I said, brutally. Upton's previous production had been called "The Fig-leaf Lady."

"That's the amazing part of it," said Edwards.

"This thing is really exquisite. It is beautifully written: quiet, telling, nothing irrelevant, not a false note. What will happen to it in Upton's hands, God knows. But he seems enthusiastic. He's a likable cutthroat: let's hope for the best. You're busy—forgive me for breaking in."

Well, of course some of you have seen "Obedience" since that time, and you know that what Edwards told me was true. The play *was* lovely; not even Upton could kill it altogether. It was Sampson's first. Have any of you read it in printed form? It reads as well as it plays. And the part that Edwards was cast for—Dunbar—is, to any competent spectator, the centre of the action. You remember the lead: the cold, hard, successful hypocrite; and then Dunbar, the blundering, kindly simpleton whose forlorn attempts to create happiness for all about him only succeed in bringing disaster to the one he loves best. It's a great picture of a fine mind and heart, a life of rich, generous possibilities, frittered and wasted and worn out by the needless petty obstinacies of destiny. And all the tragedy (this was the superb touch) because the wretched soul never had courage enough to be unkind. What was it St. Paul, or somebody, said about not being disobedient to the heavenly vision? Dunbar, in the play, was obedient enough, and his heavenly vision made his life a hell. It was the old question of conflicting loyalties. How are you going to solve that?

I suppose the tragic farce is the most perfect conception of man's mind—outside the higher mathematics, I dare say. Everyone knows Sampson's touch now, but it was new then. Some of his situations came pretty close to the nerve-roots. The pitiful absurdity of people in a crisis, exquisite human idiocy where one can't smile because grotesque tragedy is so close . . . those were the scenes that Upton's director thought needed "working up." But I'm getting ahead of my story.

Well, now, let me see. I'd better be a little chronological. It must have been September, because I know I took Labour Day off and went to Long Beach for a swim. I had just about come to the conclusion that my novel was worthless, and that I'd better get a job of some sort. At the far end of the boardwalk, you remember, there's a quiet hotel where one gets away from the crowd, and where you see quite nice-looking people. After I'd had my swim, I thought I'd stroll up that way and have supper there. It's not a cheap place, but I had been living on lunch-counter food all summer, and I felt I owed myself a little extravagance. I was on my way along the boardwalk, enjoying the cool, strong whiff that comes off the ocean toward sunset, when I saw Edwards, on the other side of the promenade, walking with a girl. My eye caught his, and we raised our hats. I was going on, thinking that perhaps he wasn't so badly off as I had imagined, when to my surprise he ran after me. He looked

very haggard and ill, and seemed embarrassed.

"Look here," he said, "it's frightfully awkward: I must have had my pocket picked somehow. I've lost my railroad tickets and everything. Could you possibly lend me enough to get back to town? I've got a lady with me, too."

I didn't need to count my money to know how much I had. It was just about five dollars, and, as you know, that doesn't go far at Long Beach. I told him how I stood. "I can give you enough for the railroad fares, and glad to," I said. "But how about supper?"

"Oh, we're not hungry," he said; "we had a big lunch." I knew this was probably bravado, but I liked him for saying it. While I was feeling in my pocket for some bills, and wondering how to pass them over to him unobtrusively, he said, "I'd like to introduce you to Miss Cunningham. We're going to be married in the autumn."

You may have seen Sylvia Cunningham? If so, you know how lovely she is. Not pretty, but with the simple charm that beauty can't—— Well, that's trite! She'll never be a great actress, but in the rôle of Sylvia Cunningham she's perfect. I hate to call her slender—it's such an overworked word, but what other is there? Dark hair and clear, amberlucent brown eyes, and a slow, searching way of talking, as if she were really trying to put thought into speech. She, too, poor child, had had a bad summer, I guessed: there was a neat little mend in her glove. She was very friendly—I think Edwards must have

told her about that *Observer* notice. I saw that they were both much humiliated at their mishap, and I judged that genial frankness would carry off the situation best.

"Life among the artists!" I said. "What are our assets?"

"I've got seventeen cents," said Edwards. It was a mark of fine breeding, I thought, that he did not insist upon saying how much it was that he had lost.

Miss Cunningham began to open her purse. "I have——"

"Nonsense!" I said. "What you have doesn't enter into the audit. In the vulgar phrase, your money's no good. I've got five dollars and a quarter. Now I suggest we go to Jamaica and get supper there, and then go back to town by trolley. It'll be an adventure."

Well, that was what we did, and very jolly it was. You know how it is: artists and actors and manicure girls and newspapermen are accustomed to ups and downs of pocket; and when they have a misery in the right-hand trouser they make up for it in a spirit of genial comradeship. Jamaica is an entertaining place. In a little lunch-room, which I remembered from a time when I covered a story out that way, we had excellent ham and eggs, and a good talk.

As we sat in that little white-tiled restaurant, I couldn't help watching Edwards. I don't know how to make this plain to you, but our talk, which was cheerful enough, was the least important

part of the occasion. Talk tells so little anyway: most of it's a mere stumbling in an almost foreign tongue when it comes to expressing the inward pangs and certainties that make up life. I had a feeling, as I saw those two, that I was coming closer than ever before to something urgent and fundamental in the human riddle. I thought that I had never seen a man so completely in love. When he looked at her there was a sort of—well, a sort of possession upon him, an enthusiasm, in the true sense of that strange word. I thought to myself that Keats must have looked at Fanny Brawne in just that way. And—you know what writers are—I must confess that my observation of these two began to turn into "copy" in my mind. I was wondering whether they might not give me a hint for my stalled novel.

There are some engaged couples that make it a point of honour to be a bit offhand and jocose when any one else is with them. Just to show, I suppose, how sure they are of each other. And somehow I had expected actors, to whom the outward gestures of passion are a mere professional accomplishment, to be a little blasé or polished in such matters. But there was a perfect candour and simplicity about them that touched me keenly. Their relation seemed a lovely thing. Too lovely, and too intense, perhaps, to be entirely happy, I thought, for I could see in Edwards's face that his whole life and mind were wrapped up in it. I may have been fanciful, but at that time I was seeing the human panorama not for itself but as a

reflection of my own amateurish scribblings. In my novel I had been working on the theory—not an original one, of course—that the essence of tragedy is fixing one's passion too deeply on anything in life. In other words, that happiness only comes to those who do not take life too seriously. Destiny, determined not to give up its secrets, always maims or destroys those who press it too closely. As we laughed and enjoyed ourselves over our meal, I was wondering whether Edwards, with his strange air of honourable sorrow, was a proof of my doctrine.

Of course we talked about the new play. Edwards had persuaded Upton to give Miss Cunningham a place in the cast, and she was radiant about it. Her eyes were like pansies as she spoke of it. I remember one thing she said:

"Isn't it wonderful? Morgan and I are together again. You know how much it means to us, for if the show has a run we can get married this winter."

"This fall," Edwards amended.

"Morgan's part is fine," she went on, after a look at him that made even a hardened reporter feel that he had no right to be there. "It's really the big thing in the play for any one who can understand. It's just made for him."

She was thoughtful a moment, and then added: "It's *too much* made for him, that's the only trouble. You're living with him, Mr. Roberts. Don't let him take it too hard. He thinks of nothing else."

I made some jocular remark, I forget what. Edwards was silent for a minute. Then he said: "If you knew how I've longed for a part like that —a part that I could really lose myself in."

"I shouldn't care," I said, "to lose myself in a part. Suppose I couldn't find myself again when the time came?"

He turned to me earnestly.

"You're not an actor, Roberts, so perhaps you hardly understand what it means to find a play that's *real*—more real than everyday life. What I mean is this: everyday life is so damned haphazard, troubled by a thousand distractions and subject to every sort of cruel chance. We just fumble along and never know what's coming next. But in a play, a good play, it's all worked out beforehand, you can see the action progressing under clear guidance. What a relief it is to be able to sink yourself in your part, to live it and breathe it and get away for awhile from this pitiless self-consciousness that tags around with us. You remember what they used to say about Booth: that it wasn't Booth playing Hamlet, but Hamlet playing Booth."

The next day, I remember, I tied up my manuscript neatly in a brown paper parcel, marked it *Literary Remains of Leonard Roberts* (I was childish enough to think that the alliteration would please my literary executor, if there should be such a person), put it away in my trunk, and went

down to Park Row to see if there were any jobs to be had. Of course it was the usual story. I had been out of the game for six months, and Park Row seemed to have survived the blow with great courage. At the *Observer* office they charitably gave me some books to review. As I came uptown on the subway I was reflecting on the change a few hours had made in my condition. That morning I had been an author, a novelist if you please; and now I was not even a reporter, but that most deplorable of all Grub Street figures, a hack reviewer. It was mid-afternoon, and I hadn't had any lunch yet. In a fit of sulks I went into Browne's, sat down in a corner, and ordered a chop and some shandygaff. As I ate, I looked over the books with a peevish eye. Never mind, I said to myself, I will write such brilliant, withering, and scorching reviews that in six months the Authors' League will be offering me hush money. I was framing the opening paragraph of my first article when Johnson, whom I had known on the *Observer*, stopped at my table. He was one of the newspaper men who had left Park Row to go into professional publicity work. There had been a time when I sneered at such a declension.

"Hullo, Leonard," he said. "What are you doing nowadays?"

I told him, irritably, that I was writing a serial for one of the women's magazines. There is no statement that puts envious awe into a newspaper

man so surely as that. But I also admitted that if he knew of a good job I might be persuaded to listen to details.

"As it happens," he said, "I do. Upton, the theatrical producer, is looking for a press agent. He tells me he's got something unusual under way, and he wants a highbrow blurb-artist. He says his regular roughneck is no good for this kind of show. Something by a new writer, rather out of Upton's ordinary line, I guess."

"Is it 'Obedience'?"

"That's it. I couldn't remember the name."

As soon as I had finished my lunch I went round to Upton's office. It was high up in a building overlooking Longacre Square, where the elevators were crowded with the people of that quaint and spurious world. The men I found particularly fascinating—you know the type, so very young in figure, often so old and hard and dry in face, with their lively tweeds, starched blue or green collars, silver-gray ties, and straight-brushed, purply-black hair. It was my first introduction to the realms of theatrical producing, and I must confess that I found Mr. Upton's office very entertaining with its air of elaborate and transparent bunkum. I sat underneath a coloured enlarged photo of the Garden of Eden ballet in "The Fig-leaf Lady" and surveyed the small anteroom. It was all intensely unreal. Those framed photographs, on which were scrawled *To Harry Upton, the Best of His Kind*, or some such inscriptions, and signed by dramatists I had never

heard of; the typist pounding out contracts; the architect's drawing of the projected Upton Theatre at Broadway and Fiftieth Street, showing a line of people at the box office—all this, I knew by instinct, meant nothing. The dramatists whose photographs I saw would never write a real play; the Upton Theatre, even if it should be built, would not house anything but "burlettas," and the typed contracts were not worth so much carbon paper. As for Mr. Upton himself, one couldn't help loving him: he was such a disarming, enthusiastic, shrewd, unreliable bandit. To abbreviate, he took me on as a member of his "publicity staff" (consisting of myself and a typewriter, as far as I could see) at one hundred dollars a week. His private office had three ingenious exits; going out by one of them, I found myself in a little alcove with the typewriter and plenty of stationery. Rehearsals of "Obedience" had started that morning, Upton had told me; so before I went home that afternoon I had typed and sent off the following pregnant paragraph for the next day's papers:

Henry Upton's first dramatic production of the season, "Obedience," by Arthur Sampson, began making elbow room for itself at rehearsals yesterday. Keith Brooks will play the leading rôle, supported by Lillian Llewellyn, Sylvia Cunningham, Morgan Edwards, and other distinguished players.

I had a feeling of cheerfulness that evening. The cursed novel was no longer on my mind, there

would be a hundred dollars due me the next week, and I was about to satisfy my long-standing curiosity to know something about the theatre from the inside. It was one of those typical evenings of New York loveliness: a rich, tawny, lingering light, a dry, clear air, warm enough to be pleasantly soft and yet with a sharp tingle in the breeze. I strolled about that bright jolly neighbourhood round the hideous Verdi statue, bought a volume of Pinero's plays at one of those combination book, cigar, and toy shops, and as I sat in my favourite Milwaukee Lunch I believe (if I must be frank) that some idea of writing a play was flitting through my mind. I got back to my room about ten o'clock. I had just sat down to read Pinero when Edwards tapped at the door. My mouth was open to tell him my surprising news when I saw that he was unpleasantly agitated. First he insisted on returning my loan, although I begged him to believe that there need be no hurry about it.

"Rehearsals began to-day," he said. He sat down on the bed and looked very sombre. "The worst possible has happened," he said. "Fagan's directing."

I tried to console him. Perhaps I felt that if Upton had shown such good sense in his choice of a press representative his judgment in directors couldn't be altogether wrong.

"Oh, well," I said, "if the play's as good as you say, he can't hurt it much. Upton believes in it, he won't let Fagan chop it about, will he? And

he's got a good cast—they won't need much direction: they know how to handle that kind of thing."

"It's plain you don't know the game," he said. "If Upton had combed Broadway from Herald Square to Reisenweber's, he couldn't have found a man so superbly equipped to kill the piece. As for poor Sampson, God help him. Fagan is a typical Broadway hanger-on, with plenty of debased cunning on his own; not a fool at all; but the last man for this kind of show, which needs imagination, atmosphere, delicate tone and tempo.

"But that's not all of it. Fagan hates me personally. He'll get me out of the company if he possibly can. He can do it, of course: he has Upton's ear." He sat a moment, one eyebrow twitching nervously. Suddenly he cried out, in a quivering, passionate voice which horrified and frightened me:

"I've *got* to play Dunbar! It's my only chance. *Everything* depends upon it."

Such an outcry, in a man usually so trained a master of himself, was pitiful. I was truly shocked, and yet I was almost on the verge of nervous laughter, I remember, when the idiotic old spinster in the next room pounded lustily on the wall. I suppose she thought we were revelling. I could see that he needed to talk. I tried to soothe him with some commonplace words and a cigarette.

"No," he said, "I know what I'm talking about. Fagan hates me. No need to go into details. He directed 'After Dinner,' you know—and massacred it. We had a row then . . . he tried to bully

a girl in the company . . . I threatened to thrash him. He hasn't forgotten, of course. He passed the word round then that I ruined the show. If this were any other play I'd have walked out as soon as I saw him. But this piece is different. I—I've set my heart on it. My God, I'm just *meant* for that part——"

In the hope of calming him, I asked what had happened at the first rehearsal.

"Oh, the usual thing. We went through the first act, with the sides. I knew my lines perfectly, the only one who did (I ought to, I've been over them incessantly these few weeks—the thing haunts me). That seemed to annoy Fagan. Sampson was there—a quiet little man with a bright, thoughtful eye. For his benefit, evidently, Fagan got off his old tosh about Victor Hugo and the preface to 'Hermani.' It's a bit of patter he picked up somewhere, and uses to impress people with. In the middle of it, he suddenly realized that I had heard it all before. That made him mad. So he cut it short, and reasserted himself by saying that the first act would have to be cut a great deal. Sampson looked pretty groggy, but said nothing. Sampson, I can see, is my only hope. Fagan will try to force me out of the show by hounding me until I lose my temper and quit. He began by telling me how to cross the stage. A man who learned the business under Frank Benson doesn't need to be taught how to walk!"

I ventured some mild sedative opinion, because I saw it did him good to pour out his perplexity.

"You don't know," he said, "how the actor is at the mercy of the director. The director is appointed by the manager and is responsible only to him. If the director takes a dislike to one of the cast, he can tell the manager he 'can't work with him,' and get him fired that way; or he can make the man's position impossible by ridicule and perpetual criticism at rehearsals. He remarked to-day that I was miscast. The fool! I've never had such a part."

Well, we talked until after midnight, and only stopped then because I was afraid that the spinster might begin to hammer again. In the end I got him fairly well pacified. He was delighted when I told him that I was going to be press agent, and I pleased him by making some memoranda of his previous career, which I thought I could work up into a Sunday story. To tell the truth, I did not, then, take all his distress at its face value. I knew he had had a difficult summer, and was in a nervous, high-strung state. I thought that his trouble was partly what we call "actors' disease," or (to put it more humanely) oversensitized self-consciousness. I promised to get round to the rehearsal the next day.

As a matter of fact, it was several days before I was able to attend a rehearsal. For the next morning Upton asked me to go to Atlantic City, where he had a musical show opening, to collect data for publicity. His regular press man was ill, and it was evident that he expected me to do plenty of work for my hundred a week. However,

it was a new and amusing job, and I was keen to absorb as much local colour as possible. I went to Atlantic City on the train with the "Jazz You Like It" company, took notes of all their life histories, went in swimming with the Blandishing Blondes quartette that afternoon, had them photographed on the sand, took care to see that they were arrested in their one-piece suits, bailed them out, and by dinner-time had collected enough material to fill the trashiest Sunday paper. In the evening the show opened, and I saw what seemed to me the most appallingly vulgar and brutally silly spectacle that had ever disgraced a stage. I wondered how a company of quite intelligent and amusing people could ever have been drilled into such laborious and glittering stupidity. The gallery fell for the Blondes, but the rest of the house suffered for the most part in silence, and I expected to see Upton crushed to earth. When I met him in the lobby afterward I was wondering how to condole with him. To my surprise he was radiant. "Well, I guess we've got a knockout," he said. "This'll sell to the roof on Broadway." He was right, too. Well, this is out of the story. I simply wanted to explain that I was away from New York for several days.

When I got back to Upton's office I was busy most of the day sending out stuff to the papers. Then I asked the imperial young lady who was alternately typing letters and attending to the little telephone switchboard, where "Obedience"

was rehearsing. At the Stratford, she replied. Wondering how many of Mr. Upton's amusing and discreditable problems were bestowed under her magnificent rippling coiffure (she was really a stunning creature), I went round to that theatre. The middle door was open and I slipped in. The house was dark, on the tall, naked stage the rehearsal was proceeding. It was my first experience of this sort of thing, and I found it extremely interesting. The stage was set out with chairs to indicate exits and essentials of furniture; at the back hung a huge canvas sea-scene, used in some revue that had opened at the Stratford the night before. The electricians were tinkering with their illuminating effects, great blazes and shafts of light criss-crossed about the place as the rehearsal went on, much to the annoyance of the actors. Little electric stars winked in the painted sky portion of the blue back-drop, and men in overalls walked about gazing at their tasks.

I sat down quietly in the gloom, about halfway down the middle aisle. Two or three other people, whose identity I could not conjecture, sat singly down toward the front. In the orchestra row, in shirtsleeves, with his feet on the brass rail and a cigar in his mouth, sat a person who, I saw, must be the renowned Fagan. Downstage were Brooks, Edwards, and a charming creature in summery costume who was obviously the original of the multitudinous photographs of Lillian Llewellyn. The rest of the company were sitting about at the back, off the scene. Edwards, who was very pale

in the violent downpour of a huge bulb hanging from a wire just overhead, was speaking as I took my seat.

"Wait a minute, folks—*wait a minute!*" cried Fagan, sharply. "Now! You've got your situation planted, let's nail it to the cross. Mr. Edwards!"

The actors turned, wearily, and Miss Llewellyn sat down on a chair. Brooks stood waiting with a kind of dogged endurance. At the back of the stage a workman was hammering on a piece of metal. Fagan pulled his legs off the rail and climbed halfway up the little steps leading from the orchestra pit to the proscenium.

"Mr. Edwards!" he shouted, "you're letting it drop. It's dead. Give it to Mr. Brooks so he can pick it up and do something with it. You've got to lift it into the domain of comedy! My God!" he cried, throwing his cigar stub into the orchestra well, "that whole act is terrible. Take it again from Miss Llewellyn's entrance. Mr. Edwards, try to put a little more stuff into it. This isn't amateur theatricals."

Edwards turned as though about to speak, but he clenched his fist and kept silent. Brooks, however, was less patient.

"Pardon me, Mr. Fagan," he said, in a clear, ironical tone. "But I should like to ask a question, if you will allow me. You speak, very forcibly, of lifting it into the domain of comedy. That seems a curious phrase for this scene. Is it in-

tended to be comic? If so, I must have misconstrued the author's directions in the script."

Brooks was too well-known a performer for Fagan to bully. Brooks was "on the lights"—in other words, when the show's electric signboard went up, it would carry his name. Around his presence hung the mystic aura of five hundred dollars a week, quite enough in itself to make Fagan respectful. The director seemed a little startled by the star's caustic accent. As a matter of fact, I don't suppose he had ever read the script as a whole. I remembered that after the first rehearsal Edwards told me that Fagan had admitted not having read the play. He said he preferred to "pick up the dialogue as they went along." This reference to the author must have seemed to him unaccountably eccentric. I daresay he had forgotten that there was such a person.

He threw up his hands in mock surrender. "All right, all right, if that's the way you take it, I've got nothing to say. Play it your own way, folks. Mr. Edwards, you're killing Mr. Brooks's scene there. Give him time to come down and get his effect."

Again I saw Edwards lift his head as though about to retort, but Brooks whispered something to him. Fagan came back to his seat in the front row and lit a fresh cigar. "Take it from Miss Llewellyn's first entrance," he shouted.

Miss Cunningham and a third man came forward and the five regrouped themselves. The

rehearsal resumed. I watched with a curious tingle of excitement. The dialogue meant little to me, plunging in at the middle of the act, but I could not miss the passionate quality of Edwards's playing. Even Brooks, a polished but very cold actor, caught the warmth. Their speeches had the rich vibrance of anger. I was really startled at the power and velocity of the performance, considering that they had only rehearsed a week. As I watched, someone leaned over my shoulder from behind and whispered: "What do you think of Dunbar?"

My eyes had grown accustomed to the gloom. I turned and saw a little man with a thin face and lifted eyebrows which gave him a quaint expression of perpetual surprise. I was so absorbed in the scene that at first I hardly understood.

"Dunbar—? Oh, Edwards?" I whispered. "I think he's corking—fine."

At that moment Edwards was in the middle of a speech. Miss Cunningham had just said something. Edwards, going toward her, had put his hand on her shoulder and was replying in a tone of peculiar tenderness. Fagan's loud voice broke in.

"Dunbar! Mr. Edwards! I can't let you do it like that. You make me hold up this scene every time. Now get it right. This is a bit of comedy, not sob stuff. Try to be a bit facetious, if you can. You're not making love to the girl—not yet!"

There was a moment of silence. Those on the stage stood still, oddly like children halted in the

middle of a game. I don't suppose Fagan's words were deliberately intended as a personal insult, but seemed to himself a legitimate comment on the action of the piece. I think his offences came more often from boorish obtuseness than calculated malice. But the brutal interruption, coming after a long and difficult afternoon, strained the players' nerves to snapping. Brooks sat down with an air of calculated nonchalance and took out a cigarette. Then a tinkling hammering began again somewhere up in the flies. Edwards was flushed.

"For God's sake stop that infernal racket up there," he cried. Then, coming down to the unlit gutter of footlights, he said quietly:

"Mr. Fagan, I've studied this part rather more carefully than you have. If the author is in the house, I'd like to appeal to him as to whether my conception is correct."

There was such a quiver of passion in his voice that even Fagan seemed taken aback.

"What's got into you folks to-day?" he growled. "Oh, very well. Is Mr. Sampson here?"

The little man behind me got up and walked down the aisle in an embarrassed way.

"Mr. Author," said Fagan, "have you been watching the rehearsal?"

Sampson murmured something.

"Is Mr. Edwards doing the part as you want it done?"

"Mr. Edwards is perfectly right," said Sampson.

"Thank you, sir," said Edwards from the stage. "Fagan, when you are ready to conduct rehearsals like a gentleman, I will be here." He turned and walked off the stage.

Brooks snapped his cigarette case to, and the sharp click seemed to bring the scene to an end. Fagan picked up his coat from the seat beside him. "Bolshevism!" he said. "All right, folks, ten o'clock to-morrow, here. Miss Cunningham, will you tell Mr. Edwards ten o'clock to-morrow?"

This last might be taken either as a surly apology, or as an added insult. Rather subtle for Fagan, I thought. As I was getting out of my seat, the director and a venomous-looking young man whom I had seen in and out of Upton's office walked up the aisle together. Sampson was just behind them. I could see that the director was either furiously angry, or else (more likely) deemed it his duty to pretend to be.

"This show's no good as long as Edwards is in it," he said, loudly, spitting out fragments of cigar wrapper. "That fellow's breaking up the company. I sha'n't be able to handle 'em at all, pretty soon. This kind of thing puts an omen on a show."

Well, that was my introduction to "Obedience." I watched Fagan and the hanger-on of Upton's office—one of those innumerable black-haired young infidels who run errands for a man like Upton, hobnob with the ticket speculators in the enigmatic argot of the box office, and seem to look

out upon the world from behind a little grill of brass railings. They moved up the velvet slope of the passage, arguing hoarsely. Sampson faded gently away into the darkness and disappeared through the thick blue curtains of the foyer. An idea struck me, and I ran behind to see the stage manager, Cervaux, who was playing one of the minor parts. I cajoled his own copy of the script away from him, promising to return it to the office the next morning. I wanted to read the play entire. Going out toward the stage door, behind a big flat of scenery I came upon Miss Cunningham. She was sitting in a rolling chair, one of those things you see on the boardwalk at Atlantic City. There was a whole fleet of them drawn up in the wings, they were used in that idiotic revue playing at the Stratford. It added to the curiously unreal atmosphere of the occasion to see her crouching there, crying, alone in the half light, among those absurd vehicles of joy.

I intended to pass as though I hadn't see her, but she called out to me. If Upton could have seen her then, her honey-brown eyes glazed with tears, black rings in her poor little pale face, he would have raised her salary—or else fired her, I don't know which.

"Mr. Roberts," she said, slowly and tremulously —"I don't know who else to ask. Will you try to help Morgan?"

"Why, of course," I said. "Anything I can do——"

"You were at the rehearsal? Then you saw

how Fagan treats him. It's been like that every day. The brute! It's abominable! You know how we had set our hearts on playing this together, Morgan and I. . . . Now I've almost come to pray that Morgan will throw it up. That's what Fagan wants, of course, but I don't care. All I want is his happiness. I said something to him about giving up the part, but he . . . Mr. Roberts, I'm *worried*. I've never seen Morgan so strange before. He's not himself. I don't know what's the matter, I have a feeling that something——"

The electricians were still fooling about with their spotlights, and a great arrow of brilliance sliced across the stage and groped about us. It blazed brutally upon her tear-stained face, and then see-sawed among the little flock of rolling chairs. It was that shaft of light that dispelled, once for all, the feeling I had had that this was all some sort of theatrical gibberish, pantomime stuff intended to impress the greenhorn press agent. For when she recoiled under the blow of that sudden stroke of brightness I could read unquestionable trouble on her face. There was not only perplexity, there was fear.

She was silent, turning her face away. Then she stepped down from the chair, in a blind sort of way.

"I begged him to give it up," she said, quietly. "He said that no one but the author could take him out of this part. I wish the author would. —Oh, I don't know what to wish! Morgan's making himself ill fighting against Fagan."

We walked across Fortieth Street together, and I escorted her as far as a Fifth Avenue bus. As we waited for the bus she said:

"You'll probably see him to-night. Tell him about rehearsal to-morrow, ten o'clock. He had gone before I could speak to him. You see, he's not himself. We were to have taken supper together."

She added something that I have never forgotten:

"The worst tragedy in the world is when lovely things get in the hands of people who don't understand them. If you see Mr. Sampson, you might tell him that. Some day he may write another play."

When I got up to Seventy-third Street I tapped at Edwards's door. He was at his table, writing. I had intended to ask him to take dinner with me, thinking that perhaps I could help him, but his manner showed plainly that he wanted to be alone. If I had been an old friend of his, perhaps I could have done something; but I did not feel I knew him well enough to force myself upon his mood.

"Fagan sent you word, rehearsal to-morrow at ten," I said. "It sounds to me like an apology."

He looked at me steadily.

"You were there to-day? You will understand a little, then."

"I understand that Fagan is a ruffian."

"Fagan—oh, I don't mean Fagan." He paused and looked at the wet point of his pen. "I was just writing a note to Sampson," he said. He

hesitated a moment, and then tore the written sheet across several times and dropped it in the basket.

"Oh, hell," he said. "I can't appeal to Sampson again. I'll have to work it out myself.—Don't imagine I take Fagan too seriously. Fagan is only an accident. A tragic accident. That's part of my weird, as the Scotch say. I mean, you'll understand better about Dunbar."

I didn't quite understand, and said nothing.

"I wouldn't let a man like Fagan stand between me and Dunbar," he said. "It's in the hands of the author now. You heard what he said. He put Dunbar into the play, he's the only one who can take him out of it."

The next morning Upton broke the news to me that I was to go out as advance man. The opening was set for Providence, only ten days later. There was to be a two-weeks' tour of three-night engagements, and I had to arrange for the publicity, poster-printing, accommodations for the company, and so on. This did not appeal to me very strongly, but I scrambled together a lot of photographs, interviewed the cast as to their preferences in hotel rooms, and set off. I got back a week later. We were then only three days away from the opening. They were rehearsing with the sets, Upton's telephone blonde told me, and I hurried round to the Stratford to see how the scenic artist had done the job.

They had just knocked off for lunch when I got there, and at the stage door I met Edwards

coming out with Miss Cunningham. He looked very white and tired.

"Hullo," I said; "just in time to have lunch with me! Come on, we'll go to Maxim's. I've still got some of Upton's expense money."

"I've got to rush round to the modiste for a fitting," said Miss Cunningham. "The gowns are just finished. You take Morgan and give him a good talking-to. He needs it." I did not quite understand the appeal in her eyes, but I saw that she wanted me to talk with Edwards alone. She went toward Bryant Park, and we turned down to Thirty-eighth. Edwards stood a moment at the corner looking after her.

"Sylvia says I'm a fool," he said, wearily. "I don't know: most of us are, one way or another.—You know I told you that I put my confidence in the author."

"Quite right," I said. "I myself heard Sampson say he thought you were corking."

"Well, I wonder if he's double-crossing me?" said Edwards, slowly, as though to himself.

"In what way?"

"Yesterday, when I was coming down to rehearsal, there was a tie-up of some kind on the subway. The train stood still for a long time, and then the lights went out. We stayed in the dark for I don't know how long—everybody got nervous. It was pitch black, and awfully hot and stuffy. The women began to scream. I felt pretty queer myself—you know I haven't been well—and as we sat there I went off into a kind

of doze or something. Then, just as everybody was on the edge of a panic, the lights came on and we went ahead. When we got to Times Square I think I must have been a bit off colour, for the damned rehearsal went out of my head entirely. Suddenly I realized I was in a drugstore drinking some headache fizz when I was over an hour late at the theatre. My God! I hustled down there as fast as I could go. Queer thing. I went in through the stage door, and as I came round behind the set I heard voices on the stage. They were rehearsing, of course. Naturally, they couldn't wait all morning for me. But this is what I'm getting at. You know that scene in the second act where I say to Brooks: 'It's all very well for you to say that. Ah, hah! I see! But suppose you had been in my place——' You know that's a turning point in the act. There's a particular inflection I give that speech—the way I say the 'Ah, hah! I see!' that makes the point clear to the audience and gets it over. Well, they were rehearsing that scene, and from behind the canvas I heard that speech. And what I heard was *my own voice.*"

"What on earth do you mean?" I said.

He hesitated. He was sitting, his lunch almost untasted, with one elbow on the table and his forehead leaning on his hand. Under his long, sinewy fingers I could see his brows tightened and frowning downward upon his plate.

"Exactly what I say. It was my own voice. Or, if you prefer, Dunbar's voice. I heard that

speech uttered, tone for tone, as I had been saying it. It was the precise accent and pitch of ironical comment which I had thought appropriate for Dunbar at that point in the action. The sudden change of tone, the pause, the placing of the emphasis—the words were just as if they had come out of my own mouth. I stopped, instinctively. I said to myself, has Fagan got someone else to play the part, and been coaching him on the side? Someone who's been sitting in at rehearsals and has picked up my conception of Dunbar? And at that moment I heard Fagan sing out 'All right, folks, the carpenter wants to work on this set. We'll quit until after lunch.'

"I tell you, I was staggered. If I was out, I was out, but they might have been straight with me. It was a matter for the Equity, I thought. I didn't want to chin it over with the others just then, and I heard them coming off, so I slipped through the door that opens into the passage behind the stage box. I meant to tell Fagan what I thought about it. There was Sampson sitting in one of the boxes. He saw me, and got up. He said: 'By Jove, Mr. Edwards, you were fine this morning. I've never seen you do it so well. It was bully, all through. Keep it like that, and you're the hit of the play.'

"I thought at first he was making fun of me. I was about to make some sarcastic retort, when he put out his hand in the friendliest way, and said:

"'I want to thank you for what you're doing

for that part, and I know it hasn't been easy. I've never seen anything so beautifully done, and just want to tell you that if the play is a success it will be largely due to you.'

"This, on the heels of the other, astounded me so that I didn't know what to say. I made some automatic reply, and he left. I sat down in the cool darkness of the box to rest, for I was feeling very seedy. My head went round and round—touch of the sun, I dare say, or that foul air in the crowded subway car. I was still there when they came back, an hour later, for the afternoon rehearsal. I tried to talk to Sylvia about it, but all she would say was that I ought to go to a doctor."

"I think she's right," I said. "Look here, have you had any sleep lately?"

"You seem to have forgotten Dunbar's line," he said. "'There'll be plenty of time to sleep by and bye.'"

"For God's sake forget about Dunbar," I said. "Man, dear, you're on the tip of a nervous breakdown. Now listen. This is Friday. Dress rehearsal to-morrow. Sunday you'll have all day off. Take Miss Cunningham and go away into the country somewhere and rest. Put the damned play out of your mind and give her a good time. You both need it."

I didn't see him again until Monday morning. I went up to Providence on the train with the company. As I passed through one of the Pullmans looking for a seat in a smoking compartment, I found Miss Cunningham and Edwards sitting in

adjoining chairs. To my delight, they seemed very cheerful, and smiled up at me charmingly.

"Took your advice yesterday," he said. "We went down to Long Beach again. Had a lovely day, not even a pickpocket to spoil it."

"What an unfortunate remark!" said Sylvia, laughing. "He means, not a pickpocket to bring us a friend in need and give us a jolly evening in Jamaica."

"I spoke the speech trippingly," he admitted.

"And we left Dunbar behind!" said Sylvia. She flashed me a grateful little look that showed she knew I had tried to help.

"Have you decided where to spend the honeymoon?" I asked, greatly pleased to see them so happy.

"Hush!" she said. "We'll wait till we see what sort of notices the show gets."

"Think of the poor press agent. I've used up all my dope. Get spliced while we're in Providence and it'll give me a nice little story. You know the kind of thing—'CRITICS' PRAISE BRINGS PAIR TO ALTAR; PRESS CLIPPINGS CUPID'S AID.'"

"You're getting as vulgar as a regular press agent," she said, merrily. "They don't think of anything except in terms of good stories for the paper."

"Oh," I said, "the press agent has his tragedies, too. Think how many stories he knows that he can't tell."

I felt that this remark was not very happily inspired, and went on through the car calling myself

a clumsy idiot. In the smoking compartment, as luck would have it, were both Upton and Fagan, smoking huge cigars and talking together. I sat down and lit my pipe. Fagan, in his usual way, was trying to impress Upton with his own sagacity. There was another musical horror of Upton's scheduled to begin rehearsal shortly, and probably Fagan was hoping to land the job as director.

"What did you think of Edwards at the dress rehearsal?" said Fagan.

Upton grunted. He had a way of retaining his ideas until others had committed themselves.

"I've been telling you right along, he's impossible," said Fagan. "No one can work with him. He's too damned upstage. Now I got Billy Mitford to promise he'd run up and see the opening. Billy is the man you need for that part. I had him in at the dress, and he'll be there tonight. I've given him a line on the part, and if Edwards falls down we can start rehearsing Billy right away. He could get set in a week, and open with the show in New York."

"Four hundred a week," was Upton's comment, seemingly addressed to the end of his cigar.

"All right, he's worth it. He's got a following. This guy Edwards is dear at any price. He'll kill the show. He doesn't get his stuff over. God knows I've worked on him. And he crabs Brooks's work more'n half the time. What you want is one of these birds that gets the women climbing over the orchestra rail. Billy is your one best bet, take it from me."

"Well, we'll open her up and see what we got," said Upton. "Is Sampson along?"

"No. Scared. Said he was too nervous to come. He'll learn to write a play afterwhile. What a mess that script was until I got her straightened out."

When we got to Providence I had several jobs to do around town. I visited the newspaper offices, stopped in at the theatre where the stage crew were busy unloading scenery, and when I returned to the hotel I lay down in my room and had a good nap. I was awakened late in the afternoon—about five o'clock, because I looked at my watch—by a knocking at the door. I got up and opened. It was Edwards. To my dismay, his cheerfulness had vanished. He had gone back to the old pallid and anxious mood.

"Nervous, old man?" I said. When I had booked the rooms for the company I had arranged that he and I should be next door to each other, so that I could keep an eye on him.

"Nervous?" he said. "I'm ill. Had another of those damned swimming spells in my head. Haven't got any brandy, have you?"

I hadn't, but offered to go in search of some. He wouldn't let me.

"Don't go," he said. "Look here, I saw Mitford in the lobby just now. What the devil is he doing here?"

"Perhaps there's some other show on," I suggested, miserably.

"I told you they were trying to double-cross

me," he said. "I know perfectly well what he's here for. Fagan is trying to razz me into a breakdown. Then he'll put Mitford in as Dunbar. But I tell you, I'll play this thing in spite of hell and high water."

He paced feverishly up and down, and I tried to ease his mind.

"By God, they sha'n't!" he cried. "I'll put this thing up to the author. Where's Sampson?"

"He's not here. For heaven's sake, man, don't get in a state. Everything's all right."

"Everything's all right!" he repeated, bitterly. "Yes, everything's lovely. Let's 'lift it into the domain of comedy.' But if you see Fagan, tell him to keep away from me."

I begged him to rest until dinner-time. I went into his room with him, made him lie down on the bed, rang for a bottle of ice water, and left him there. Then I went downstairs and wrote a couple of letters. I was just leaving the hotel when I met Fagan coming in. He stopped me to ask if I had taken care to put his name on the playbill as director. I had. If the show was a flop, I at least wanted his name attached as a participial cause.

I wandered uneasily about the busy streets until theatre time. I couldn't have been more nervous if I had been going on the boards myself. I spent part of the time prowling about trying to see how much "Obedience" paper I could find on the billboards and in shop windows. I stopped in at a lunchroom and had some supper. The place

reminded me of the little café in Jamaica where Sylvia and Edwards and I had eaten together. My mind was full of the picture of the two, and his face as he leaned across the table toward her. I thought that I had never seen a couple who so deserved happiness, or who had fought harder to earn it. What was the subtle appeal in this play that made it react so strangely upon him? The tragedy of Dunbar in the piece, the sacrifice of the poor, well-meaning fellow whose virtue always seemed to turn and rend him, did this echo some secret experience in his own life? I wondered whether an actor's career was really the gay business I had conceived it. It occurred to me that perhaps the actor's profession is doomed to suffering, because it takes the most dangerous explosives in life and plays with them. Love, ambition, jealousy, hatred, those are the things actors deal with. You can't play with those without one of them going off every now and then. They go off with a bang, and somebody gets hurt.

I suppose I'm sentimental. I wanted those two to win out. It seemed to me that a defeat for their fine and honourable passion would be a defeat for Love everywhere, and for all who believe in the worthy aspirations of the heart. I don't suppose any press agent ever pondered more generous philosophies than I did that night, over my lunch-counter supper.

Time went so fast that it was after eight when I got to the theatre. I went in and took a seat in the last row. The house, to my surprise, was

crowded. I could see Upton's big bald head, well down in front, beside a massively carved lady, all bust and beads, whom I supposed to be Mrs. Upton. The élite of Providence were out in force, for Brooks's name is always a drawing card. Some of them, I feared, were going to be disappointed. It is all very well to introduce a new Barrie or a new Pinero to the playgoing public, but you've got to remember that it is bound to be grievous for those who prefer the other sort of thing.

The curtain, of course, was late, and I gave a sigh of relief when I saw it go up. Edwards, waiting carefully for the hush, had the house with him in three speeches. I have never seen better work, before or since. It was noticeable that at his first exit he got a bigger hand than Brooks at his carefully prepared entrance. The only thing that seemed to me out of the way was his extreme pallor. The silly ass, I said to myself, he hasn't made himself up properly. Then it struck me that it was probably a sound touch of realism, for certainly Dunbar would not be described as a full-blooded creature. I had read the play carefully, and had seen it in rehearsal; but I had never known how much there was in it. Strangely enough, Edwards was the only one who showed no trace of nervousness. All the others, even Brooks, seemed unaccountably at a loss now and then, trampled on their lines, and smothered their points. At first the house was inclined to applaud, but as the action tightened, they hushed

into the perfect and passionate silence that is the playwright's dream. There were six curtains at the end of the first act. I could tell by the tilt of old Upton's pink pate that he was in fine spirits. I looked about for Fagan in the lobby, as I was keen to see how he was taking it, but missed him in the arguing and shifting crowd.

By the time the third act was under way it was plain that we had a sure-fire success. Novice as I was, I could read the signs when I saw Upton scribbling telegrams at the box-office window in the second intermission, and observed the face of Mr. Mitford. The usual slips that always happen on first nights were there, of course. In the third act, when Edwards had to take Sylvia in his arms, she seemed to trip and almost fell; and I noticed that Brooks crossed the stage and helped her off, which was not in the script; but these things were not marked by most of the audience. Dunbar, you remember, makes his final exit several minutes before the end of the third act. When he went off there was a little stir among the audience—far more eloquent than applause would have been. That beautiful delineation of a blundering, high-minded failure had made its appeal.

After Edwards's last exit I felt my way out, quietly, and went round through the street and up the alley to the stage door. I wanted to be the first to congratulate him on his splendid triumph. I did not want to break in too soon, so I waited near the door until I heard the crash of hands that followed the curtain. The canvas

rose and fell repeatedly as the players took their calls, while the house shook with applause. From where I stood, by the switches and buttons on the control board, I could see them lined up in the orange glare of the gutter, bowing and smiling. There were cries of "Dunbar! Dunbar!" and a rumbling of feet in the gallery. It is the only time I have ever seen an audience crowd down the aisles and stand by the orchestra rail, applauding. Then I saw why they lingered. Edwards had not taken his call.

The curtain fell again, and Cervaux, the stage manager, came running off, the perspiration streaming down over his grease-paint.

"Christ!" he cried. "Where's that fool Edwards?"

As soon as the curtain finally shut off the house I could see the actors turn to each other as though in dismay. Miss Cunningham came off, and I ran to shake her hand. To my amazement she looked at me blankly, with a dreadful face, and sat down on a trunk.

Brooks strode across the stage. "Where's Edwards?" he shouted, angrily. "Tell him to take this call with me, the house is crazy."

"Where's the author?" said someone. "They want the author, too."

Several hurried upstairs to the men's dressing rooms, and I followed. The door of number 3, on which Edwards's name was scrawled in chalk, stood open. Cervaux stood stupidly on the sill. The room was empty.

"He's gone," said Cervaux. "What do you know about that?"

We could still hear the tumult of the house.

"Take the curtain, Mr. Brooks," said Cervaux. "Tell them he's ill."

I looked round number 3 dressing room.

There was a taxi standing outside the stage door. I don't know how it happened to be there, or who had ordered it, but I shouted to the driver and jumped in. I have a faint impression that just as the engine started Sylvia appeared at the door, with a cloak thrown over her stage gown, and cried something, but I am not sure.

When I got to the hotel, the door of the room next to mine was locked, but the house detective got it open without any noise. There were two men in the room. In the far corner lay Fagan, unconscious, with a broken jaw, one arm hideously twisted under him, and a shattered water bottle beside his bloody head. Sprawled against the bed, kneeling, with his arms flung out across the counterpane, was Edwards.—The doctor said it was heart disease. He had been dead since six o'clock.

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

TO ROBERT BROWNING

THERE is delight in singing, tho' none hear
Beside the singer; and there is delight
In praising, tho' the praiser sit alone
And see the prais'd far off him, far above.
Shakespeare is not our poet, but the world's,
Therefore on him no speech! and brief for thee,
Browning! Since Chaucer was alive and hale,
No man hath walked along our roads with step
So active, so inquiring eye, or tongue
So varied in discourse. But warmer climes
Give brighter plumage, stronger wing: the breeze
Of Alpine heights thou playest with, borne on
Beyond Sorrento and Amalfi, where
The Siren waits thee, singing song for song.

WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

SAUL

SAID Abner, "At last thou art come! Ere I tell, ere thou speak,
Kiss my cheek, wish me well!" Then I wished it, and did kiss his cheek.

And he: "Since the King, O my friend, for thy countenance sent,
Neither drunken nor eaten have we; nor until from his tent
Thou return with the joyful assurance the King liveth yet,
Shall our lip with the honey be bright, with the water be wet.
For out of the black mid-tent's silence, a space of three days,
Not a sound hath escaped to thy servants, of prayer nor of praise,
To betoken that Saul and the Spirit have ended their strife,
And that, faint in his triumph, the monarch sinks back upon life.
"Yet now my heart leaps, O beloved! God's child with his dew
On thy gracious gold hair, and those lilies still living and blue
Just broken to twine round thy harp-strings, as if no wild heat
Were now raging to torture the desert!"

Then I, as was meet,
Knelt down to the God of my fathers, and rose on my feet,
And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder. The tent was unlooped;
I pulled up the spear that obstructed, and under I stooped;

Hands and knees on the slippery grass-patch, all
withered and gone,
That extends to the second enclosure, I groped
my way on
Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open. Then
once more I prayed,
And opened the foldskirts and entered, and was
not afraid
But spoke, "Here is David, thy servant!" And
no voice replied.
At the first I saw naught but the blackness: but
soon I descried
A something more black than the blackness—the
vast, the upright
Main prop which sustains the pavilion: and slow
into sight
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of all.
Then a sunbeam, that burst through the tent-roof,
showed Saul.

He stood as erect as that tent-prop, both arms
stretched out wide
On the great cross-support in the centre, that goes
to each side;
He relaxed not a muscle, but hung there as, caught
in his pangs
And waiting his change, the king-serpent all
heavily hangs,
Far away from his kind, in the pine, till deliver-
ance come
With the spring-time,—so agonized Saul, drear and
stark, blind and dumb.

Then I tuned my harp,—took off the lilies we twine round its chords
Lest they snap 'neath the stress of the noontide —those sunbeams like swords!
And I first played the tune all our sheep know, as, one after one,
So docile they come to the pen-door till folding be done.
They are white and untorn by the bushes, for lo, they have fed
Where the long grasses stifle the water within the stream's bed;
And now one after one seeks its lodging, as star follows star
Into eve and the blue far above us,—so blue and so far!

—Then the tune for which quails on the cornland will each leave his mate
To fly after the player; then, what makes the crickets elate
Till for boldness they fight one another; and then, what has weight
To set the quick jerboa a-musing outside his sand house—
There are none such as he for a wonder, half bird and half mouse!
God made all the creatures and gave them our love and our fear,
To give sign, we and they are his children, one family here.

Then I played the help-tune of our reapers, their
wine-song, when hand
Grasps at hand, eye lights eye in good friendship,
and great hearts expand
And grow one in the sense of this world's life.—
And then, the last song
When the dead man is praised on his journey—
"Bear, bear him along,
With his few faults shut up like dead flowerets!
Are balm seeds not here
To console us? The land has none left such as
he on the bier.

Oh, would we might keep thee, my brother!"—
And then the glad chaunt
Of the marriage,—first go the young maidens,
next, she whom we vaunt
As the beauty, the pride of our dwelling.—And
then, the great march
Wherein man runs to man to assist him and
buttress an arch
Naught can break; who shall harm them, our
friends? Then, the chorus intoned
As the Levites go up to the altar in glory en-
throned.
But I stopped here: for here in the darkness Saul
groaned.

And I paused, held my breath in such silence, and
listened apart;
And the tent shook, for mighty Saul shuddered:
and sparkles 'gan dart

From the jewels that woke in his turban, at once, with a start,
All its lordly male-sapphires, and rubies courageous at heart.
So the head: but the body still moved not, still hung there erect.
And I bent once again to my playing, pursued it unchecked,
As I sang:—

"Oh, our manhood's prime vigor! No spirit feels waste,
Not a muscle is stopped in its playing nor sinew unbraced.
Oh, the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock,
The strong rending of boughs from the fire-tree, the cool silver shock
Of the plunge in a pool's living water, the hunt of the bear,
And the sultriness showing the lion is couched in his lair.
And the meal, the rich dates yellowed over with gold dust divine,
And the locust-flesh steeped in the pitcher, the full draught of wine,
And the sleep in the dried river-channel where bulrushes tell
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well.

How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!
Hast thou loved the white locks of thy father, whose sword thou didst guard
When he trusted thee forth with the armies, for glorious reward?
Didst thou see the thin hands of thy mother, held up as men sung
The low song of the nearly-departed, and hear her faint tongue
Joining in while it could to the witness, 'Let one more attest,
I have lived, seen God's hand through a lifetime and all was for best?'

Then they sung through their tears in strong triumph, not much, but the rest.
And thy brothers, the help and the contest, the working whence grew
Such result as, from seething grape-bundles, the spirit strained true:
And the friends of thy boyhood—that boyhood of wonder and hope,
Present promise and wealth of the future beyond the eye's scope,—
Till lo, thou art grown to a monarch; a people is thine;
And all gifts, which the world offers singly, on one head combine!
On one head, all the beauty and strength, love and rage (like the throe

That, a-work in the rock, helps its labor and lets
the gold go),
High ambition and deeds which surpass it, fame
crowning them,—all
Brought to blaze on the head of one creature—
King Saul!"

And lo, with that leap of my spirit,—heart, hand,
harp and voice,
Each lifting Saul's name out of sorrow, each
bidding rejoice
Saul's fame in the light it was made for—as when,
dare I say,
The Lord's army, in rapture of service, strains
through its array,
And upsoareth the cherubim-chariot—"Saul!"
cried I, and stopped,
And waited the thing that should follow. Then
Saul, who hung propped
By the tent's cross-support in the centre, was
struck by his name.
Have ye seen when Spring's arrowy summons
goes right to the aim,
And some mountain, the last to withstand her,
that held (he alone,
While the vale laughed in freedom and flowers)
on a broad bust of stone
A year's snow bound about for a breast-plate,—
leaves grasp of the sheet?
Fold on fold all at once it crowds thunderously
down to his feet.

And there fronts you, stark, black, but alive yet, your mountain of old,
With his rents, the successive bequeathing of ages untold—
Yea, each harm got in fighting your battles, each furrow and scar
Of his head thrust 'twixt you and the tempest—all hail, there they are!
—Now again to be softened with verdure, again hold the nest
Of the dove, tempt the goat and its young to the green on his crest
For their food in the ardours of summer. One long shudder thrilled
All the tent till the very air tingled, then sank and was stilled
At the King's self left standing before me, released and aware.
What was gone, what remained? All to traverse 'twixt hope and despair,
Death was past, life not come: so he waited. Awhile his right hand
Held the brow, helped the eyes left too vacant forthwith to remand
To their place what new objects should enter: 'twas Saul as before.
I looked up and dared gaze at those eyes, nor was hurt any more
Than by slow pallid sunsets in autumn, ye watch from the shore,
At their sad level gaze o'er the ocean—a sun's slow decline

Over hills which, resolved in stern silence, o'erlap
and entwine
Base with base to knit strength more intensely: so,
arm folded arm
O'er the chest whose slow heavings subsided.

What spell or what charm,
(For awhile there was trouble within me,) what
next should I urge
To sustain him where song had restored him?—
Song filled to the verge
His cup with the wine of this life, pressing all that
it yields
Of mere fruitage, the strength and the beauty:
beyond, on what fields,
Glean a vintage more potent and perfect to
brighten the eye
And bring blood to the lip, and commend them
the cup they put by?
He saith, "It is good"; still he drinks not: he
lets me praise life,
Gives assent, yet would die for his own part.

Then fancies grew rife
Which had come long ago on the pasture, when
round me the sheep
Fed in silence—above, the one eagle wheeled slow
as in sleep;
And I lay in my hollow and mused on the world
that might lie
'Neath his ken, though I saw but the strip 'twixt
the hill and the sky:

And I laughed—"Since my days are ordained to be passed with my flocks,
Let me people at least, with my fancies, the plains and the rocks,
Dream the life I am never to mix with, and image the show
Of mankind as they live in those fashions I hardly shall know!
Schemes of life, its best rules and right uses, the courage that gains,
And the prudence that keeps what men strive for."
And now these old trains
Of vague thought came again; I grew surer; so, once more the string
Of my harp made response to my spirit, as thus—

"Yea, my King,"
I began—"thou dost well in rejecting mere comforts that spring
From the mere mortal life held in common by man and by brute:
In our flesh grows the branch of this life, in our soul it bears fruit.
Thou hast marked the slow rise of the tree,—how its stem trembled first
Till it passed the kid's lip, the stag's antler; then safely outburst
The fan-branches all round; and thou mindest when these two, in turn,
Broke a-bloom and the palm-tree seemed perfect: yet more was to learn,

E'en the good that comes in with the palm-fruit.
Our dates shall we slight,
When their juice brings a cure for all sorrow? or
care for the plight
Of the palm's self whose slow growth produced
them? Not so! stem and branch
Shall decay, nor be known in their place, while
the palm-wine shall stanch
Every wound of man's spirit in winter. I pour
thee such wine,
Leave the flesh to the fate it was fit for! the spirit
be thine!
By the spirit, when age shall o'ercome thee, thou
still shalt enjoy
More indeed, than at first when inconscious, the
life of a boy.
Crush that life, and behold its wine running!
Each deed thou hast done
Dies, revives, goes to work in the world; until e'en
as the sun
Looking down on the earth, though clouds spoil
him, though tempests efface,
Can find nothing his own deed produced not, must
everywhere trace
The results of his past summer-prime,—so, each
ray of thy will,
Every flash of thy passion and prowess, long over,
shall thrill
Thy whole people, the countless, with ardor, till
they too give forth
A like cheer to their sons, who in turn fill the
South and the North

With the radiance thy deed was the germ of.
    Carouse in the past!
But the license of age has its limit; thou diest
    at last:
As the lion when age dims his eyeball, the rose
    at her height,
So with man—so his power and his beauty forever
    take flight.
No! Again a long draught of my soul-wine!
    Look forth o'er the years!
Thou hast done now with eyes for the actual;
    begin with the seer's!
Is Saul dead? In the depth of the vale make his
    tomb—bid arise
A gray mountain of marble heaped four-square,
    till, built to the skies,
Let it mark where the great First King slumbers:
    whose fame would ye know?
Up above see the rook's naked face, where the
    record shall go
In great characters cut by the scribe,—Such was
    Saul, so he did;
With the sages directing the work, by the popu-
    lace chid,—
For not half, they'll affirm, is comprised there!
    Which fault to amend,
In the grove with his kind grows the cedar,
    whereon they shall spend
(See, in tablets 'tis level before them) their praise,
    and record
With the gold of the graver, Saul's story,—the
    statesman's great word

Side by side with the poet's sweet comment.
The river's a-wave
With smooth paper-reeds grazing each other when
prophet-winds rave:
So the pen gives unborn generations their due and
their part
In thy being! Then, first of the mighty, thank
God that thou art!"

And behold while I sang . . . but O Thou
who didst grant me that day,
And before it not seldom hast granted thy help
to essay,
Carry on and complete an adventure,—my shield
and my sword
In that act where my soul was thy servant, thy
word was my word,—
Still be with me, who then at the summit of
human endeavor
And scaling the highest man's thought could,
gazed hopeless as ever
On the new stretch of heaven above me—till,
mighty to save,
Just one lift of thy hand cleared that distance—
God's throne from man's grave!
Let me tell out my tale to its ending—my voice
to my heart
Which can scarce dare believe in what marvels
last night I took part,

As this morning I gather the fragments, alone with
my sheep,
And still fear lest the terrible glory evanish like
sleep!
For I wake in the gray dewy covert, while Hebron
upheaves
The dawn struggling with night on his shoulder
and Kidron retrieves
Slow the damage of yesterday's sunshine.

I say then,—my song
While I sang thus, assuring the monarch, and
ever more strong
Made a proffer of good to console him—he slowly
resumed
His old motions and habitudes kingly. The right
hand replumed
His black locks to their wonted composure, adjusted the swathes
Of his turban, and see—the huge sweat that his
countenance bathes,
He wipes off with the robe; and he girds now his
loins as of yore,
And feels slow for the armlets of price, with the
clasp set before.
He is Saul, ye remember in glory,—ere error had
bent
The broad brow from daily communion; and
still, though much spent
Be the life and the bearing that front you, the
same God did choose,
To receive what a man may waste, desecrate,
never quite lose.

So sank he along by the tent-prop till, stayed by the pile
Of his armor and war-cloak and garments, he leaned there awhile,
And sat out my singing,—one arm round the tent-prop, to raise
His bent head, and the other hung slack—till I touched on the praise
I foresaw from all men in all time, to the man patient there;
And thus ended, the harp falling forward. Then first I was 'ware
That he sat, as I say, with my head just above his vast knees
Which were thrust out on each side around me, like oak roots which please
To encircle a lamb when it slumbers. I looked up to know
If the best I could do had brought solace: he spoke not, but slow
Lifted up the hand slack at his side, till he laid it with care
Soft and grave, but in mild settled will, on my brow: through my hair
The large fingers were pushed, and he bent back my head, with kind power—
All my face back, intent to peruse it, as men do a flower.
Thus held he me there with his great eyes that scrutinized mine—
And oh, all my heart how it loved him! but where was the sign?

I yearned—"Could I help thee, my father, inventing a bliss,
I would add, to that life of the past, both the future and this;
I would give thee new life altogether, as good, ages hence,
As this moment,—had love but the warrant, love's heart to dispense!"

Then the truth came upon me. No harp more—no song more! outbroke—

"I have gone the whole round of creation: I saw and I spoke:
I, a work of God's hand for that purpose, received in my brain
And pronounced on the rest of his handwork—returned him again
His creation's approval or censure: I spoke as I saw:
I report, as a man may of God's work—all's love, yet all's law.
Now I lay down the judgeship he lent me. Each faculty tasked
To perceive him, has gained an abyss, where a dewdrop was asked.
Have I knowledge? confounded it shrivels at Wisdom laid bare.
Have I forethought? how purblind, how blank to the Infinite Care!
Do I task any faculty highest, to image success?
I but open my eyes,—and perfection, no more and no less,

In the kind I imagined, full-fronts me, and God is seen God
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod.
And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew
(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it too)
The submission of man's nothing-perfect to God's all-complete,
As by each new obeisance in spirit, I climb to his feet.
Yet with all this abounding experience, this deity known,
I shall dare to discover some province, some gift of my own.
There's a faculty pleasant to exercise, hard to hoodwink,
I am fain to keep still in abeyance, (I laugh as I think)
Lest, insisting to claim and parade in it, wot ye, I worst
E'en the Giver in one gift.—Behold, I could love if I durst!
But I sink the pretension as fearing a man may o'ertake
God's own speed in the one way of love: I abstain for love's sake.
—What, my soul? see thus far and no farther? when doors great and small,
Nine-and-ninety flew ope at our touch, should the hundredth appall?

In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the
greatest of all?
Do I find love so full in my nature, God's ultimate
gift,
That I doubt his own love can compete with it?
Here, the parts shift?
Here, the creature surpass the Creator,—the end,
what Began?
Would I fain in my impotent yearning do all for
this man,
And dare doubt he alone shall not help him, who
yet alone can?
Would it ever have entered my mind, the bare
will, much less power,
To bestow on this Saul what I sang of, the mar-
vellous dower
Of the life he was gifted and filled with? to make
such a soul,
Such a body, and then such an earth for inspher-
ing the whole?
And doth it not enter my mind (as my warm tears
attest)
These good things being given, to go on, and give
one more, the best?
Ay, to save and redeem and restore him, maintain
at the height
This perfection,—succeed with life's day-spring,
death's minute of night?
Interpose at the difficult minute snatch Saul the
mistake,
Saul the failure, the ruin he seems now,—and bid
him awake

From the dream, the probation, the prelude, to find himself set
Clear and safe in new light and new life,—a new harmony yet
To be run, and continued, and ended—who knows? —or endure!
The man taught enough by life's dream, of the rest to make sure;
By the pain-throb, triumphantly winning intensified bliss,
And the next world's reward and repose, by the struggles in this.

"I believe it! 'Tis thou, God, that givest, 'tis I who receive:
In the first is the last, in thy will is my power to believe.
All's one gift: thou canst grant it moreover, as prompt to my prayer
As I breathe out this breath, as I open these arms to the air.
From thy will stream the worlds, life and nature, thy dread Sabaoth:
I will?—the mere atoms despise me! Why am I not loth
To look that, even that in the face too? Why is it I dare
Think but lightly of such impuissance? What stops my despair?

This;—'tis not what man Does which exalts him, but what man Would do!
See the King—I would help him but cannot, the wishes fall through.
Could I wrestle to raise him from sorrow, grow poor to enrich,
To fill up his life, starve my own out, I would—knowing which,
I know that my service is perfect. Oh, speak through me now!
Would I suffer for him that I love? So wouldst thou—so wilt thou!
So shall crown thee the topmost, ineffablest, uttermost crown—
And thy love fill infinitude wholly, nor leave up nor down
One spot for the creature to stand in! It is by no breath,
Turn of eye, wave of hand, that salvation joins issue with death!
As thy Love is discovered almighty, almighty be proved
Thy power, that exists with and for it, of being Beloved!
He who did most, shall bear most; the strongest shall stand the most weak.
'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh, that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. O Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,

Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever: a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee! See the Christ stand!

I know not too well how I found my way home in the night.
There were witnesses, cohorts about me, to left and to right,
Angels, powers, the unuttered, unseen, the alive, the aware:
I repressed, I got through them as hardly, as strugglingly there,
As a runner beset by the populace famished for news—
Life or death. The whole earth was awakened, hell loosed with her crews;
And the stars of night beat with emotion, and tingled and shot
Out in fire the strong pain of pent knowledge: but I fainted not,
For the Hand still impelled me at once and supported, suppressed
All the tumult, and quenched it with quiet, and holy behest,
Till the rapture was shut in itself, and the earth sank to rest.
Anon at the dawn, all that trouble had withered from earth—
Not so much, but I saw it die out in the day's tender birth;

In the gathered intensity brought to the gray of
the hills;
In the shuddering forests' held breath; in the sud-
den wind-thrills;
In the startled wild beasts that bore off, each with
eye sidling still
Though averted with wonder and dread; in the
birds stiff and chill
That rose heavily, as I approached them, made
stupid with awe:
E'en the serpent that slid away silent,—he felt the
new law.
The same stared in the white humid faces up-
turned by the flowers;
The same worked in the heart of the cedar and
moved the vine-bowers:
And the little brooks witnessing murmured, per-
sistent and low,
With their obstinate, all but hushed voices—
"E'en so, it is so."

ROBERT BROWNING.

THE DEATH OF OLIVIER BÉCAILLE

I

IT WAS on a Saturday, at six o'clock in the morning, that I died, after three days' illness. My poor wife was bending over a trunk in which she kept her linen. When she rose and saw I was rigid, with eyes wide open, and had ceased to breathe, she ran to me, thinking that I had fainted. She felt my hands and face, and then, suddenly seized with terror, fell to sobbing:

"My God, my God! He is dead!"

I heard everything, but the sounds were faint, and seemed to come from afar. With my left eye I could perceive a confused light, in which objects were blurred and indistinct; my right eye seemed to be completely paralysed. A syncope of my entire being, with the suddenness of a stroke of lightning, had made me powerless. My will was dead; not a fiber of my nerves obeyed me. Only within my impotent, inert frame thought remained, slow and languid, but perfectly clear.

My poor Marguerite wept on her knees beside the bed, repeating brokenly:

"He is dead! My God! He is dead!"

Could this really be death, this curious state of torpor, this flesh stricken to rigidity, while the mind kept on working? Was this my soul, waiting a little in my brain before taking its flight? I had been subject to nervous attacks since childhood. Twice, while still young, a sharp fever had almost carried me off. They had become used to seeing me delicate and sickly; and I had myself forbidden Marguerite to send for a physician, when I had gone to bed on the morning of our arrival in Paris, in this little hotel in the Rue Dauphine. It was merely the fatigue of the journey which had exhausted my strength, and a little rest would soon set me up again. Nevertheless, I had felt myself in the grasp of dread anxiety. We had left our little country town in very straitened circumstances, having scarcely enough money to last until I should receive my first month's salary from the firm which had promised me a position. And now a sudden attack had stricken me down!

Could this then be death? I had imagined a night more dark, a silence more heavy. Even as a little child I was afraid of death. As I was delicate and people petted me pityingly, I came to believe that I should not live long and that I should be buried at an early age. And this thought of the earth filled me with a horror that I could never accustom myself to, although it haunted me night and day. This fixed idea remained with me as I grew older. Sometimes, after days of reflection, I believed that I had

overcome my fear. Oh, well! one dies, and that is the end; everyone must die some day; nothing could be a more convenient or better arrangement. I became almost light-hearted; I looked death in the face. Then a sudden chill would freeze me, and I would grow dizzy, as if some giant hand had held me over a gloomy pit. It was the thought of the earth that had returned to me and swept away my reasoning. How many times, in the middle of the night, have I not jumped up in bed, my slumbers disturbed by some strange, poisonous breath, clasping my hands in despair and sobbing, "My God! my God! I must die!" My blood froze with fear; the necessity of death seemed to me even more abominable in the confused condition of my senses at the abrupt awakening. It was only with difficulty that I was able to go to sleep again; even sleep itself alarmed me, so much did it resemble death. What if I should sleep forever! What if I closed my eyes never to open them again!

I know not if others have suffered from this agony. For me it has poisoned existence. Death has stood between me and everything I have loved. I remember the happiest moments spent with Marguerite. During the first months of our marriage, when she slept at my side, when I built up, thinking of her, dreams of the future, the fear of a last parting always entered in, to embitter my joy and destroy my hopes. We must part—it might be to-morrow, it might be within

the hour. Despair fell upon me like a heavy weight; I asked myself what was the use of our mutual happiness, since it inevitably led to so cruel an end. Then my imagination would travel still farther. Who would be taken first—she or I? And either alternative brought the tears to my eyes as I unrolled the picture of our broken lives. Thus, during the happiest times of my existence, I have been attacked by sudden fits of melancholy which would be understood by no one. When good luck befell me my friends were astonished to see me gloomy. It was the thought of my annihilation which had suddenly crossed my joy. The terrible "What is the use?" sounded on my ears like a knell.

But the worst of this torment is that one endures it like some secret shame. One dare not tell of it. It often happens that both husband and wife, lying side by side, shudder at the same foreboding, after the light has been extinguished; yet neither speaks, because one does not speak of death any more than one would mention an obscene word. One fears it to the point of not naming it; one hides it as one hides one's sex.

While I pondered upon these things, my dear Marguerite went on sobbing, and it was hard for me to lie there, unable to calm her grief by telling her that I was not in pain. If death was nothing more than this swoon of the flesh, I surely was wrong in fearing it so much. It was a state of selfish comfort and repose, from which

cares were absent. My memory especially had assumed an extraordinary activity. My entire life passed rapidly before me, as though I were present at some spectacle which I had not seen before. It was a strange and curious sensation, and amused me much. It might have been some faint voice reciting my history.

There was a little country corner, near Guerande, on the road to Piriac, which entered my recollection. At the bend of the road a grove of pines hangs over a rocky slope. When I was seven years old I went there with my father, and in a tumble-down house ate pancakes with Marguerite's family—poor folk who led a hand-to-mouth existence selling fish. Then I recalled the school at Nantes, where I had grown up, between tiresome old walls, perpetually irritated by a desire for the sweeping horizon of Guerande, with the marshes stretching out from the lower town as far as the eye could reach, and the broad sea sparkling under the sky. Then came a black spot: my father died, I engaged with the management of a hospital as a servant, and began a monotonous existence, whose only excuse was my Sunday visits to the old house on the road to Piriac. Matters went from bad to worse, the fish brought almost nothing, and the country-side became poverty-stricken. Marguerite was no more than a child. She liked me because I took her riding in a wheelbarrow. But later, when I asked her to marry me, I understood, from her

frightened gesture, that she looked upon the idea with horror. Her parents had given their consent immediately; it would be a relief to them. She, submissive, did not say no. When she grew accustomed to the idea of being my wife she did not seem to be much displeased. On the day of our wedding, at Guerande, I remember that it rained in torrents, and, when we returned, that she went about in petticoats, because her dress had become soaked.

That is all my youth. We lived down there for some time. But one day, when I reached home, I found my wife in tears. She was tired of it and wished to go away. By the end of six months I had saved a little money, chiefly from the proceeds of extra work; and, as an old friend of my family had promised to find me a position in Paris, I took my dear little girl there, in order that she might weep no more. In the train she laughed. When night came, the seats of the third-class carriages being very hard, I took her upon my knees so that she might sleep comfortably.

But that was all past. Now, at this hour, I had just died on this meager lodging-house bed, while my wife lay weeping on her knees before it. The white patch I perceived with my left eye paled little by little, but I clearly recalled the appearance of the room. To the left was the wash-stand; to the right, the mantelpiece, in the center of which a long, silent clock gave out the time as ten minutes past ten. The window opened on the Rue Dauphine, black and profound.

All Paris passed by there, and such was the din that I heard the panes of glass rattle in their frames.

We knew no one in Paris. As we had hastened our departure, I was not expected until the following Monday at the offices of the firm. It was a strange sensation to feel one's self imprisoned in this room, still bewildered and confused by the fifteen-hours' railway journey and the noise of the Paris streets. My wife had attended to me with smiling gentleness, but I felt that she was alarmed. From time to time she went to the window and looked out into the street; then she returned quite pale, frightened by that vast Paris of which she knew not a single stone and which thundered so terribly. What was she to do if she could not awaken me? What would become of her in this immense city, alone, without assistance, thrown upon her own resources?

Marguerite had taken one of my hands which hung, inert, over the edge of the bed. She kissed it passionately and cried out repeatedly: "Olivier, answer me! My God! he is dead! he is dead!"

Death was not unconsciousness, then, since I could hear and reason. It was non-existence that had terrified me since my childhood. I imagined the disappearance of my being, the total destruction of what I was; and that for all time, through centuries and still centuries to come, with no possibility of rebirth. Sometimes, when I found in a newspaper a date relating to the next century, I shuddered: I should certainly

not be alive at that date; the thought of a year of the future that I should not see and in which I should be no more, filled me with anguish. Was I not the world, and would it not all crumble when I departed?

To dream of life in death—such had always been my hope. But this certainly could not be death. I should surely awaken presently. Yes, presently I should lean over and take Marguerite in my arms. What joy it would be to speak to each other again! And how much stronger would be our love! I would take two more days' rest and then I would go to my office. A new life would begin for us—a happier life and a wider. However, I was in no hurry. Just at the moment I was too weak. Marguerite was wrong to give way to such despair, but I lacked the strength to turn my head on the pillow and smile at her. Presently, when she came to me again, I would murmur very low, so as not to frighten her, while I kissed her cheek:

"I am only sleeping, dear child. Don't you see that I am alive, and that I love you?"

II

At the cries which escaped from Marguerite's lips, the door was suddenly opened, and a voice said:

"Why, what's the matter, neighbor? Another attack?"

I recognized the voice. It was that of an old woman, a Madame Gabin, who lived on the

same floor as ourselves. Evidently sympathizing with our lonely position, she had shown herself very obliging to us.

"My God! Is it the end?" she asked, lowering her voice.

I felt that she was approaching. She looked at me, touched me, then murmured gently:

"My poor child! My poor child!"

Marguerite, overcome, wept unceasingly. Mme. Gabin lifted her up and seated her in the wooden armchair near the mantelpiece, where she tried to console her.

"Come, you will get ill. You need not give way to despair just because your husband is gone. Certain, when I lost Gabin, I felt like you do now; I went for three whole days without swallowing so much as a pinch of food. But that did no good; on the contrary, it only made matters worse. Come, for heaven's sake, be sensible."

Little by little, Marguerite quieted down. Her strength was all gone; but now and again a fit of sobbing still shook her. In the meantime, the old woman took possession of the room, saying with rough kindness:

"Don't bother about anything. Neighbors must help one another. I see that your trunks are not yet quite unpacked, but there is linen in the chest of drawers, is there not?"

I heard her open a drawer. She must have taken out a napkin and spread it on the table. Then she struck a match, which made me think that she was going to light one of the candles

on the mantelpiece to place near my head. I followed all her movements in the room, taking note of her slightest actions.

"The poor gentleman!" she murmured. "How fortunate that I heard you crying, my dear."

Suddenly the misty light that I could still observe with my left eye disappeared. Mme. Gabin had just closed my eyes. I had not felt the touch of her finger on my eyelids. When at last I understood, a chill began to creep down my backbone.

But soon the door opened. Dédé, Mme. Gabin's ten-year-old daughter, entered, calling out in a shrill voice:

"Mama, Mama! I knew you would be here. Here is your bill—three francs and four sous. I took twenty dozen blinds."

"Hush! hush! don't say any more!" vainly repeated the mother.

As the little girl went on, her mother pointed to the bed. Dédé stopped, and, evidently alarmed, retreated toward the door.

"Is the gentleman sleeping?" she asked in a low voice.

"Yes; run away and play," replied Mme. Gabin.

But the child would not go. She seemed to be looking at me with wide-open eyes, startled and vaguely understanding. Suddenly she was seized with a mad fear, and overturned a chair in her haste to get out of the room.

"He is dead! Oh, Mama, he is dead!"

Deep silence reigned. Marguerite, half-lying in the armchair, wept no longer. Mme. Gabin still busied herself about the room. She began to mutter between her teeth.

"Children know everything nowadays. Look at that one. God knows I have brought her up properly! When she goes on an errand I count the number of minutes she is away, in order to be sure she is getting into no mischief. But that makes no difference; she knows everything; she knew at once what the matter was. And yet she has seen only one corpse, her Uncle François, and at that time she was only four years old. Oh, well! what can you expect? There are no more children now!"

She interrupted herself, and passed without pause to another subject.

"You know, little one, we must think of the formalities, the declaration to the municipality, and all the details of the funeral. But you are in no condition to attend to that. And I don't want to leave you alone. If you don't mind, I will go and see if Monsieur Simoneau is at home."

Marguerite did not reply. I heard all this conversation as from a great distance. It seemed to me at times as though I were flying, like subtle flame, in the air of the room, while some stranger, a shapeless mass, rested inert on the bed. Nevertheless, I should have preferred Marguerite to decline the services of this Simoneau. I had seen him three or four times during my short illness. He occupied a near-by room, and had

been very civil. Mme. Gabin had told us that he was in Paris merely temporarily, in order to collect some old debts of his father, who had just died in the provinces. He was a tall young man, handsome and strong. I detested him, probably because he always looked so well, He had visited us the evening before, and it had pained me to see him near Marguerite. She looked so pretty and so white at his side! And he had looked at her so fixedly, while she smiled at him, saying that he was very good to come so soon to ask after my health.

"Here is M. Simoneau," whispered Mme. Gabin, who returned.

He opened the door gently, and Marguerite, as soon as she saw him, again burst into tears. The sight of this friend, the only man she knew, opened her grief afresh. He did not try to console her. I could not see him; but in the shadows that surrounded me I made out his face, and I could perceive that he felt sorry at finding the poor woman in such despair. And how pretty she must have looked, with her loosened fair hair, her pale face, and her dear little childish hands burning with fever!

"I am entirely at your service, madame," murmured Simoneau. "If you will only let me take charge of everything——"

Her reply was confused and broken. But as the young man went out, Mme. Gabin accompanied him, and I heard her speak of money as she

passed me. It would cost a great deal, and she feared that the poor thing hadn't a penny. However, one might ask her. Simoneau prevailed upon the old woman to be silent. He did not wish to trouble Marguerite. He then went to the municipality to arrange about the funeral.

When silence set in again, I asked myself how long this nightmare was going to last. I knew I must be alive, since I was aware of every movement about me. And I began to take exact account of my condition. It was evidently one of those cases of epilepsy of which I had so often heard. Even when quite a young child, at the time of my nervous illness, I had had syncopes lasting several hours. It was evidently an attack of this nature that held me rigid as the dead, and which deceived every one about me. But my heart would soon beat again, the blood would once more circulate in my veins, and I should awake and console Marguerite. While reasoning thus, I bade myself have patience.

Hours passed. Mme. Gabin had brought my wife some breakfast. Marguerite refused to eat anything. Then the noon hour struck. From the open window I heard the noise of the traffic in the Rue Dauphine. A light clink of copper from the small table at the head of the bed apprized me that they were changing the candle. At last, Simoneau reappeared.

"Well?" ejaculated the old woman.

"Everything is settled," he replied. "The

funeral is for to-morrow at eleven o'clock. Don't be alarmed, and don't mention these things before that poor woman."

"The doctor for the dead has not been here yet," said Mme. Gabin.

Simoneau sat down near Marguerite, spoke a few encouraging words, and fell silent. The funeral was for the next day at eleven o'clock. The phrase reverberated in my brain like a knell. And this doctor who had not yet come—this doctor for the dead, as Mme. Gabin had called him—he would see in a moment that I was simply in a trance. He would do what was necessary to awaken me. I awaited him in frightful impatience. However, the day wore on. Mme. Gabin, in order not to waste her time, had finished her blinds. Furthermore, after having asked permission of Marguerite, she had brought back Dédé, because, as she said, she did not believe in leaving children long by themselves.

"Come in," she whispered, taking the little girl by the hand, "and don't be silly. Don't look toward that side of the room, or I shall be cross."

She forbade her to look at me, evidently thinking that the proper thing to do. Dédé probably gave a glance occasionally in my direction, for I heard her mother slap her on the arm, saying, angrily:

"Keep your eyes on your work, now, or I'll send you away, and to-night the gentleman will come and pinch your feet."

Both mother and daughter sat down at the table. The noise of their scissors cutting the blinds reached me distinctly. It was probably a delicate piece of work, for they did not seem to make much progress. I counted their strokes, one by one, to deaden my increasing anguish.

So the only sound in the room came from the cutting of these scissors. Marguerite, overmastered by weariness, was probably asleep. Simoneau rose. The abominable thought that he might profit by Marguerite's slumber to touch her hair with his lips tortured me. I did not know this man, and I felt that he loved my wife. A laugh from little Dédé increased my irritation.

"What are you laughing at, little fool?" asked her mother. "I will put you out into the street. Come, what is it that makes you laugh?"

The child stammered. She had not laughed; she had only coughed. As for me, I imagined that she had seen Simoneau bend over Marguerite and that the action had seemed funny to her.

The lamp had just been lighted when some one knocked.

"Ah, here is the doctor," said the old woman.

It was, in fact, the doctor. He did not even excuse himself for being so late. Undoubtedly he had had many stairs to climb during the day. As the lamp lighted the room so feebly, he asked:

"The corpse is here?"

"Yes, sir," replied Simoneau.

Marguerite had risen, shivering. Mme. Gabin

had sent Dédé out into the hall, for a child has no business to see such things; and she was trying to drag my wife toward the window, in order that she might be spared the sight. The doctor lost no time. I gathered that he was tired, impatient, and in a hurry. Did he touch my hand? Did he listen for my heart-beat? I do not know. But it seemed to me that he simply looked at me carelessly.

"Would you like me to hold the lamp for you?" suggested Simoneau obligingly.

"No; it is not necessary," said the doctor quietly.

What, unnecessary! This man had my life in his hands, and he considered it unnecessary to make a careful examination. But I was not dead! I wanted to cry out that I was not dead!

"Ah, at what time did he die?" he went on.

"At six o'clock this morning," replied Simoneau.

A furious revolt surged up within the terrible bonds which held me. Oh! the agony of being powerless to speak or move a muscle!

The doctor added:

"This heavy weather is bad. Nothing is so enervating as the first days of spring."

And then he went away. It was my life that had gone. Cries, tears, imprecations stifled me, lacerated my convulsed throat, from which not a sound escaped. Ah! the despicable man, of whom routine had made a machine, and who visited a deathbed with no more thought than to fulfil a simple formality! Why, he knew

nothing, this man! Of what use was all his science, if he could not tell at once the difference between life and death! And he went away—he went away!

"Good-night, sir," said Simoneau.

There was a silence. The doctor had bowed to Marguerite, who had returned, while Mme. Gabin closed the window. Then he left the room; I heard his footsteps descending the staircase.

So this was the end. I was condemned. My last hope had vanished with that man. If I did not awake before the next day at eleven o'clock I should be buried alive. And the thought was so frightful that I lost consciousness. It was like a swoon in death itself. The last sound that struck my ear was the metallic click of scissors. The death vigil commenced. No one spoke. Marguerite had refused to sleep in the next room. She was there, half recumbent in the armchair, with her beautiful face pallid, her eyes closed, with the lids bathed in tears, while Simoneau gazed at her silent in the shadows.

III

I never could find words to describe the agony I felt during the morning of the next day. It has remained to me like a horrible dream, in which my emotions were so strange and so distressed that it would be difficult for me to chronicle them accurately. What made my torture the more frightful was that I hoped at every moment

for a sudden awakening. And the nearer the hour of the funeral approached, the more acute became my anguish. It was not until the next morning that I again became conscious of my surroundings. A grating sound cut short my sleep. Mme. Gabin had opened the window. It was probably about seven o'clock, because I heard the call of pedlars in the street, the shrill voice of a boy selling chickweed, another, hoarser voice, offering carrots for sale. This noisy awakening of Paris soothed me at first; it seemed impossible that I could be buried in the earth, in the middle of all this stir and animation. Moreover, my memory corrected me. I recalled having seen a case similar to mine when I was employed in the hospital at Guerande. A man there had been unconscious for twenty-four hours; his sleep was so deep that it puzzled the doctors. Then, suddenly, he sat up, and at once was able to go about his business. I had already been asleep twenty-five hours, but if I awoke before ten o'clock it would be time enough.

I tried to find out the number of people in the room, and what they were doing. Little Dédé was evidently playing outside, for a childish laugh came in through the open door. Undoubtedly Simoneau had left; no sound that I could hear indicated his presence. Mme. Gabin's footsteps were the only evidences of life in the room. At last she spoke.

"My dear," said the old woman, "you should take it while it is hot. It will refresh you."

She addressed herself to Marguerite, and the tinkling noise of crockery on the mantelpiece apprised me that she was pouring out coffee.

"Yes, I needed that," she went on to say. "At my age, of course, it is nothing to sit up all night, but then it is so gloomy when there is misfortune in the house. Take some coffee, my dear; just a drop."

And she forced Marguerite to drink a cup of it.

"Now, doesn't that refresh you? You will need strength to sustain you through the day. If you are wise, you will go into my room and wait there."

"No, I will stay here," replied Marguerite firmly.

Her voice, which I had not heard since the evening before, touched me. She was changed, broken with grief. Ah, the dear creature! I felt in her presence a last consolation. I knew that she never kept her eyes away from me, and that she was shedding for me the tears of her innermost heart. But the minutes passed. I heard, through the door, a noise that I could not at first understand. It sounded like the carrying in of some piece of furniture which knocked against the walls of the too narrow staircase. Then, on hearing the sobs of Marguerite break out afresh, I knew that it was the coffin.

"You have come too soon," said Mme. Gabin ill-humoredly. "Put it behind the bed."

What time was it then? Nine o'clock, perhaps. So the coffin was already there. I could distinguish it in the heavy darkness, quite new, the wood still showing the marks of the planer's hands. My God! is everything going to end? Are they going to take me away in this box that lies at my feet?

There was left for me, however, one supreme joy. Marguerite, in spite of her weakness, desired to administer the last attentions to me. It was she who, helped by the old woman, dressed me with the tenderness of a sister and a wife. I felt that I was once again in her arms every time she passed a garment over me. She stopped, almost fainting under her strong emotion; she pressed me to her, bathing me with her tears. I would have returned her embrace, crying, "I live!" But I lay there powerless and remained stiff and stark.

"You are foolish to do that; it will all be lost," said Mme. Gabin.

Marguerite replied in a whisper:

"Let me alone. I want to dress him in the best things we have."

I knew then that she was clothing me as if for my wedding day. I still kept those garments, which I counted on wearing in Paris on special occasions. Then she fell back in the armchair, exhausted by the effort she had just put forth.

Suddenly Simoneau spoke. Probably he had just come in.

"They are downstairs," he murmured.

"Good; it is not too soon," replied Mme. Gabin, also lowering her voice. "Tell them to come up; we must finish all this."

The old woman seemed to reflect. She continued:

"Listen, M. Simoneau; you must take her by force into my room. I don't want her to stay here. You will be doing her a service. Meanwhile, the affair will be over in a twinkling."

The words struck me to the heart. And what were my thoughts as I heard the frightful struggle that commenced! Simoneau had approached Marguerite, begging her to leave the room.

"For pity's sake," he implored, "come with me; spare yourself these useless pangs."

"No, no," replied my wife; "I will stay. I wish to stay until the last moment. Consider that I have only him in the world, and that when he is gone I shall be alone."

However, I heard Mme. Gabin, who was near the bed, whisper in the ear of the young man:

"Quick! take her away; carry her in your arms."

What, was Simoneau going to take Marguerite away like that! All at once she cried out. On a furious impulse, I would have jumped to my feet. But the springs of my being were broken; and I remained so rigid that I could scarcely even raise my eyelids to see what was going on in front of me. The struggle continued; my wife cowered among the furniture, crying:

"Oh! have mercy, have mercy, sir! Let me be! I don't want to go!"

He had evidently seized her with his strong arms, and she could utter only feeble remonstrances. He carried her out, the sobbing died away, and I almost imagined I could see them—he tall and robust, holding her against his breast, and she, exhausted, allowing herself to be carried wherever he wished to take her.

"Gracious! that was no child's play!" murmured Mme. Gabin. "Let us have it over, then, now that the coast is clear!"

In the jealous rage which consumed me, I looked upon this affair as an abominable abduction. I had not seen Marguerite since the day before, but I could still hear her voice; and now even that was at an end. They were about to take me away. A man had carried off my wife before I had even been put under the earth. And he was with her, behind the screen, consoling her, embracing her perhaps!

The door opened, and heavy feet stamped into the room.

"Hurry, hurry," continued Mme. Gabin, "or the poor lady will be back before you have gone." She spoke to strangers, whose only replies were grunts.

"I am not a relative, you understand—only a neighbor. I am making nothing out of all this. It is from pure goodness of heart that I am mixing myself up with their affairs. And it is no

great fun, either. Yes, yes, I spent the night here. It was not so warm at four o'clock in the morning, I can tell you. But I was always foolish in that way."

At that moment they pulled the coffin into the middle of the room, and I understood. I was doomed, then, since my awakening did not come. My thoughts lost their clearness, everything whirled about me in a black mist, and I felt such utter weariness that the loss of my reasoning powers was welcome to me.

"They didn't spare the wood," said the hoarse voice of one of the undertaker's assistants. "The coffin is too long."

"Oh, well! he will be all the more comfortable," added another jokingly.

I was not heavy, upon which fact they congratulated themselves, for they had three flights of stairs to descend. Just as they lifted me by the shoulders and the heels, I heard Mme. Gabin fly into a sudden rage.

"Little rascal!" she cried. "Shove your nose into everything, will you? Just wait until I get you alone."

It was Dédé, who had opened the door and was peering curiously through it. She wished to see them put the gentleman in the coffin. Two vigorous slaps resounded, followed by an explosion of sobs. And when the mother returned she talked about her daughter with the men who were arranging me in the coffin.

"She is ten years old. She is a good girl, you know, but very inquisitive. I don't often whip her, but she must obey."

"Oh!" said one of the men, "all children are like that. Whenever there is a corpse anywhere, they are always about."

I was placed comfortably enough, and I could have believed myself still in bed but for the pressure on my left arm, which was squeezed against the side of the coffin. It was as they said; I lay there at my ease, thanks to my slight build.

"Wait," cried Mme. Gabin, "I promised his wife to put a pillow under his head!"

But the men were in a hurry; they hurt me as they packed the pillow under me. One of them cursed because he could not find the hammer. They had left it below, and had to go down for it. The lid was put on, and I felt a shudder run through my whole body as two strokes of the hammer knocked in the first nail. It was all over; I had lived. Then the nails went in rapidly, one by one, while the hammer played its lugubrious accompaniment. They might have been packers nailing down a box of dried fruit from the cool way in which they went about it. Gradually the sounds became duller and more prolonged, resounding curiously, as if the wooden box had been transformed into a musical box. The last word that struck my ear in that room on the Rue Dauphine was a remark by Mme. Gabin:

"Be careful, now, and look out for the staircase on the second floor; it is shaky."

My sensations as they carried me out were those of a man being rolled about in a choppy sea. But from that moment my recollections became very indefinite. I remember, however, that the only thing that occupied my mind, a stupid and mechanical preoccupation, was to speculate on the route we should take to the cemetery. I did not know a single street in Paris, and was ignorant of the location of the principal cemeteries, the names of which I had occasionally heard. But that did not prevent me from concentrating the last efforts of my intellect on the question as to whether we were turning to the right or to the left. The hearse jolted me over the pavement. About me the rumbling of vehicles and the rustling of the people on the footwalks were modified by the coffinwood into a confused clamor. At first I followed the route with a good deal of clearness. Then there was a stop, and I was taken out. I understood that we were at the church. But when the hearse went on again I lost all perception of the streets through which we traveled. A chime of bells apprised me that we were passing a church; a softer and more continuous rumbling of wheels made me believe that we were driving down some promenade. I was like a condemned man being led to the gibbet, stupefied, awaiting the final blow which came not. They came to a stop, and took me out of the hearse; and there was a

sudden silence. All the noises had ceased. I felt that I was in some deserted place, under trees, the wide heaven over my head. Several people seemed to be following the hearse; probably Simoneau and other guests of the house, for the sound of low talking reached me. A psalm was sung, and a priest murmured something in Latin. There were indefinite movements which lasted about two minutes. Then, suddenly, I felt that I was being lowered into the ground. Ropes scraped against the sides of the coffin, sounding like the strings of a double-bass viol. It was the end. A terrible shock, like the discharge of a cannon, reverberated over my head; a second shock, this time over my feet, convulsed me; another, so violent that I thought it would break the coffin, fell over my middle. And I fainted.

IV

How long did I remain there? I could not say. An eternity and a second are of equal duration in oblivion. I was no more. Little by little, vaguely, the consciousness of being returned to me. I still slept, but I had begun to dream. A nightmare cut itself loose from the black canopy that covered my horizon. And this dream which I had was of the stuff that in my imagination had so often tortured me in my youth, at such times when, with a nature predisposed to horrible inventions, I almost enjoyed the atrocious pleasure of creating catastrophies

for myself. I imagined that my wife awaited me somewhere—at Guerande, I think—and that I had taken the train to join her. As the train went through a tunnel, all at once there came a frightful crash, like a peal of thunder. Our train had not been injured, however, but the rock had caved in before and behind us, so that we found ourselves imprisoned in the center of a mountain, the only outlets barred by great blocks of stone. Then began a period of frightful agony. There was no hope of relief; it would take a month to cut through the tunnel; the work, moreover, would require infinite precautions and extraordinarily powerful machinery. We were prisoners in a sort of cave without an entrance. Our death was merely a question of hours.

Often had my imagination played upon such a terrible fate. I used to vary the tragedy. Sometimes its actors were men, women, children, hundreds of people, a vast multitude which provided me with new episodes without end. There would be, perhaps, provisions in the train, which would soon be exhausted, and then the miserable prisoners would fight with each other for the last morsel of bread. An old man would moan with pain as they beat him to the ground; or a mother would fight like a tiger to defend the half-dozen mouthfuls she had kept for her child. In my coach a young married couple lay clasped in each other's arms; they had lost hope and made no further efforts. The passengers alighted from the train and ran about wildly,

like beasts in search of prey. All classes mingled; a very wealthy man, a high official, someone said, wept on the neck of a workman. For some time the lamps had been extinguished, and even the fires of the locomotive had gone out. In walking, one had to keep hold of the train, in order to avoid knocking one's head. Nothing could be more weird and awful than this train, sealed under the rocks, as though buried alive, with its passengers dying one by one. I revelled in the horrors of even the smallest details. Shrieks pierced the shadows. All at once a man whom no one had noticed fell fainting against my shoulder. I was suffering from cold and lack of air. Almost suffocated, it seemed to me as if an avalanche were rolling over my chest, as if the whole mountain were weighing me and bearing me down. Suddenly a shout of joy went up. For a long time we had imagined that we heard a low muffled sound from the other side of the rock. But help had not arrived from that quarter. One of us had discovered a hole in the rock; and we hurried toward this hole, at the end of which we could perceive a blue spot as big as a man's hand. Oh, with what thankfulness we greeted that blue spot! It was the sky. We could distinguish the movements of black objects, undoubtedly workmen laboring for our deliverance. A wild shout leaped from every mouth, "Saved! Saved!" while trembling arms were lifted toward that little spot of pale blue.

It was the violence of this clamor that awoke

me. Where was I? Still in the tunnel, undoubtedly. I found myself lying on my back, and I felt, at right and left, a hard substance which pressed my sides. I tried to raise myself, but severely bumped my head in the attempt. Did rocks enclose me on every side, then? And the blue spot had disappeared; the sky was no longer there, not even far away. I was gasping, and I ground my teeth with a shudder.

Suddenly I remembered. My hair stood on end with horror, and I felt the frightful truth run through me, from the feet to the head, like an icy current. Had I at last recovered from this syncope, which had confined me for many hours in the rigidity of a corpse? Yes, I could move, and I passed my hands along the boards of the coffin. One last proof remained to me: I opened my mouth and spoke, instinctively calling for Marguerite. I screamed, and my voice, reverberating in the pine box, sounded so awful that it terrified me. My God! was it true, then? I could talk, cry out that I lived, and my voice would not be heard! I was a helpless prisoner under the earth!

I made a supreme effort to calm myself and think. Was there no way of getting out? My dream recommenced, and my brain was still so muddled that my imagination confused the air-hole with its spot of blue sky with the grave wherein I lay gasping. With eyes wide open, I tried to pierce the gloom. Perhaps I should see a nail, a crack, a glimmer of light! But there

was only an impenetrable cloak of blackness. Then my head suddenly became clear, and I realized that I must act at once if I wished to save my life. At first the greatest danger seemed to lie in the increasing probabilities of suffocation. I had, undoubtedly, been able to go for a long time without air, thanks to the syncope which temporarily suspended my functions; but now that my heart beat and my lungs renewed their duties, I should be asphyxiated if I could not very soon escape. I suffered also from cold, and feared to be overtaken by that fatal stupor which attacks men who are caught in the snow.

While all the time repeating to myself that I must be calm, I felt gusts of madness mount to my brain. I strove to recall the details of a burial. Had I not heard that at Paris burials were made at a depth of six feet? How would it be possible to pierce such an enormous mass of earth? Even if I could break the coffin, would not the earth run in, like fine sand, and fill my eyes and mouth? And that would still be death, an abominable death, drowned in dirt.

Nevertheless, I felt carefully about me. The coffin was large, and I could move my arms with ease. I could discover no crack in the wood. The planks, both to right and to left, were badly planed, but thick and tough. In passing my hand over the boards above my head, I discovered a knot in the wood, which gave way under pressure. Although I worked under great difficulties, I at last succeeded in shoving the knot through, and

on the other side my finger met the earth. There was evidently no help that way. I even regretted having made the hole, fearing that the earth might come in. But another discovery soon took up my attention. In order to try to find a crack somewhere, I tapped the sides of the coffin with my hand. To right and to left the sound was heavy and echoless. But when I kicked lightly at the end of the coffin it seemed to me that the noise was more hollow. Of course, this might have been simply the greater resonance of the wood. Then I began to push, first with arms and then with the knees. The wood resisted. Finally I put the strength of my whole body into violent kicks, but there was not even a crack. My bones ached so that I cried out. It was at this moment that I lost my head.

Up to that time I had held out against a vertigo, the gusts of rage that mounted to my head like fumes of wine. Above all, I was careful to repress my cries, for I knew that, if I cried out, I was lost. All at once I began to shriek, to yell. It was too much for me. I called for help in a voice that I did not recognize, protesting that I would not die. And I scratched the wood with my nails, twisting myself into convulsions like a trapped wolf. How long did this attack last? I do not know, but I still feel the implacability of the coffin that confined me; I still hear the storm of cries and sobs that shook me. In a last glimmering of reason, I tried to contain myself and could not.

A great exhaustion followed. I waited, in a sort of painful stupor, for death. The coffin was stone; I should never be able to breathe. This certainty of my failure left me faint, without courage to make a new attempt. Another pang, that of hunger, united with cold and suffocation to destroy me. I despaired. Soon this last torture became unendurable. With my finger I tried to draw pinches of earth through the knot-hole, and I ate this earth. I bit my arms, but I dared not draw the blood. My flesh tempted me, and I felt at it gluttonously. Ah, how I wished for death at that instant! All my life I had trembled at the idea of non-existence, and now I desired it—demanded it; nor could it be black enough. What childishness to rebel against this sleep without dreams, this eternity of silence and gloom! Oh, to sleep like the stones, to return to dust, to be no more!

My hands mechanically continued their journey about the wood. Suddenly something pricked my left thumb, and the pain roused me out of my stupor. What was that? I felt again and found a nail—a nail that the undertaker's assistants had knocked in crookedly, and which had only entered one side of the coffin. It was very long and pointed. The head remained in the lid, but I felt it move under my hand. From that moment I had only one thought—to get that nail. I passed my right hand over my chest and commenced to work it sideways. It did not yield much, and the work was hard.

I often changed my hands, for the left, narrowly hemmed in, quickly became tired. While I was thus occupied, a complete plan developed in my head. This nail would be my salvation. It was necessary to me. But would there still be time? Hunger tortured me, and at intervals I was compelled to stop working by an attack of dizziness which left my muscles powerless and my mind feeble. I had sucked up the drops of blood which ran from the scratch on my thumb. Then I bit my arm and drank the blood, spurred on by pain and revived by the warm and bitter wine that moistened my mouth. And I went at the nail again with both hands. This time I succeeded in extricating it.

From then dated my belief in ultimate success. My plan was a simple one. I pressed the point of the nail into the wood of the coffin lid, and moved it lengthwise, backward and forward, so as to make a deep gash. My hands became numb, and I worked myself into a furious passion against my own weakness. After I had cut sufficiently deep into the wood, it was my plan to turn over on my stomach and raise myself on my knees. This I did, but, although the lid cracked, it did not break. The cut was not yet deep enough. I had to turn over again on my back and begin over afresh. At the second attempt the lid split from one end to the other. True, I was not saved yet, but hope filled my heart. I stopped pushing and remained motionless, fearing some fall of the earth that might

smother me. My idea was to use the lid as a sort of shield, while I tried to tunnel through the earth. Unfortunately, this scheme presented great difficulties. Heavy clods of earth, detached from the general mass, clogged the boards so that I could not budge them. Dust was already getting into my mouth and eyes, and I was forced to keep my face downward. I never should be able to reach the light in this way. Fear was again taking possession of me, when—as I was stretching out to find some more comfortable posture—I fancied that the end of the coffin yielded to the pressure of my feet. I kicked vigorously with my heel, thinking that beyond that board of the coffin there might be an unoccupied grave.

All at once my feet shot out into the air. My surmise was correct: a newly made grave was there. I had only a slender division of earth to push through in order to roll into it. Great God, I was saved!

For an instant I lay on my back at the bottom of the open grave, looking at the sky. It was night. Above, the stars twinkled out of a canopy of velvet. Occasionally the breeze would bring to me a taste of the softness of spring or the sweet smell of trees. Great God! I was saved, I breathed, I was warm, and I wept; and I sobbed, my hands devoutly raised toward infinity. Oh, but it was good to live!

My first thought was to direct my steps to the house of the cemetery's caretaker, so that he

might send me home. But certain thoughts, still undefined, stopped me. I should terrify everybody. Why hurry, when I was master of the situation? I felt my limbs. With the exception of the slight traces of my teeth in my left arm, I was sound; and the fever caused by that injury gave me unlooked-for strength. Certainly I should be able to walk without assistance. So I took my time. All sorts of confused thoughts passed through my brain. I had felt, as I tumbled into the grave, spades left by the diggers, and with these I felt impelled to repair the damage that I had done, to fill in the hole, so that no one would know of my resurrection. At this time I had no definite plan; I merely thought it unnecessary to let my adventure be known, feeling a certain shame at living when everyone believed me dead. After half an hour's work, all traces of the hole had been effaced. Then I climbed out of the grave.

What a beautiful night! A deep silence reigned in the cemetery. The black trees seemed motionless shadows among the whiteness of the tombstones. As I sought my way out, I noticed that half the horizon flamed with light. Paris was there. I went in that direction, walking along an avenue, in the darkness of its trees. But I had not taken many steps before I had to stop, already fatigued; and I sat down on a stone bench. I found then that I was completely dressed, even to my boots, and that I only lacked a hat. How I thanked my dear Marguerite for the pious

sentiment that had led her to dress me! The sudden memory of Marguerite brought me to my feet. I wished to see her.

At the end of the avenue a wall stopped me. I climbed on one of the tombstones, from which I gained the coping. On the other side of the wall I dropped. The shock was severe. For some minutes I walked along a wide, deserted street which skirted the cemetery. I knew nothing of my whereabouts, but I repeated to myself, with the obstinacy of a fixed idea, that I was going to Paris and to the Rue Dauphine. People passed me, but I did not even question them, mistrusting everyone, and wishing to confide in nobody. I now remember that I was shaken by a heavy fever, and that my mind was wandering. At last, as I turned into a great thoroughfare, I was seized with faintness, and fell heavily on the footwalk.

For three weeks I was unconscious. When at last I came to my senses, I found myself in a strange room. A man was there, tending me. He told me simply that he had found me, one morning, on the Boulevard Montparnasse, and had taken me home with him. He was an old doctor who had given up his practice. When I thanked him, he replied brusquely that my case had struck him as interesting, and that he wished to study it. Moreover, in the first days of my convalescence he would not allow me to ask him any questions. Later, he put some to me.

For another week I kept to my bed, my mind being in such a state that I did not even try to remember anything, for memory was weariness and sorrow. I felt myself filled with shame and fear. When I was able to go out, I would see. Perhaps, in my delirium, I had murmured names; but the doctor never alluded to anything that I might have said. He was discreet in his charity.

However, the summer had arrived. One June morning I obtained permission to take a short walk. It was a glorious morning, one of those sunny days that give youth to the streets of old Paris. I walked slowly, asking at each corner for the Rue Dauphine. When I reached it I had difficulty in recognizing the little lodging-house where we had lived. A childish fear agitated me. If I suddenly appeared before Marguerite I feared that the shock might kill her. The best thing, probably, would be first to see the old woman, Mme. Gabin, who probably still lived there. But the idea of putting someone between us displeased me. I would stop at nothing. At the bottom of my heart there seemed to be a great void, as though created by some sacrifice made a long time since.

The house shone yellow in the sun. I recognized it from a little cheap restaurant on the ground floor, at which we had often eaten. I raised my eyes to the last window on the third floor to the left. It was wide open. All at once a young woman, not completely dressed, looked out.

Behind her a young man approached, and kissed her on the neck. It was not Marguerite. I was not surprised. It seemed as though I had already dreamed that, as well as other things I was about to see.

For a moment I stood in the street undecided, wondering whether or not to go up and question the young lovers, who were still laughing in the sun. Then I thought it best to go into the little restaurant below. I could hardly be recognized: my beard had grown during my illness, and my face was lined. As I sat down at a table I saw Mme. Gabin, who had just entered, with a cup for two sous' worth of coffee. As she stood at the counter she gossiped with the proprietress. I listened.

"Well!" asked the woman, "has the poor little woman on the third floor decided yet?"

"What do you think?" replied Mme. Gabin. "Can she do better? And M. Simoneau has been so kind to her. He has wound up his father's affairs; he has a lot of money, and has offered to take her to the country with him to live with one of his aunts, who wants a companion."

The woman behind the counter giggled. I had buried my face in a newspaper, and my hands trembled.

"It will certainly end in marriage," Mme. Gabin went on. "But I give you my word of honor that I have seen nothing improper. The poor woman was mourning for her husband, and the young man conducted himself perfectly.

However, they went away yesterday. After her term of mourning has expired, they will be able to do what they like."

Just then the door opened and Dédé came in.

"Aren't you coming up, Mama? I am waiting. Come quick."

"Presently. Don't be in such a hurry!" said the mother.

The little girl remained, listening to the two women, with the precocious air of the Paris street-child.

"Well! After all," continued Mme. Gabin, "the husband was no match for M. Simoneau. I never liked him, the little whippersnapper. Always whining! And not a penny! No! a husband like that is not much good for a woman with blood in her veins. Now as for M. Simoneau, there you have a man with money, and strong as a Turk."

"Oh!" interrupted Dédé, "I saw him myself, one day while he was shaving. He had hair on his arms!"

"Will you go!" cried the old woman, shaking her. "You are always sticking your nose where it ought not to be."

Then, concluding:

"Yes, the other did well to die. It was a fine piece of luck."

When I again found myself in the street I walked slowly and with difficulty. I did not suffer much, however. I even smiled when I saw my shadow in the sun. Certainly I was

very thin; it was a singular idea for me to marry Marguerite. And I recalled how tired she was of Guerande, her fits of impatience, her dull and unhappy life. The dear creature was always so good. But I had never been her lover; it was a brother whom she mourned. Why should I disturb her life again? A dead man is not jealous. When I raised my head I saw the Luxembourg gardens before me. I went in and sat in the sun, lost in agreeable reveries. The thought of Marguerite was pleasant now. I imagined her in a little town in the country, very happy, much beloved, and much admired, grown still more beautiful, and with three sons and two daughters. Come! I was a fine fellow, dead, and I would certainly not make the cruel mistake of coming to life.

Since that time I have traveled much, and lived in many lands. I am a commonplace man, who has worked and eaten like everyone else. Death no longer terrifies me; but it seems that he does not want me now that I have no reason to live, and I am afraid he may have forgotten me.

ÉMILE ZOLA.

THE COURTING OF T'NOWHEAD'S BELL

FOR two years it had been notorious in the square that Sam'l Dickie was thinking of courting T'nowhead's Bell, and that if little Sanders Elshioner (which is the Thrums pronunciation of Alexander Alexander) went in for her he might prove a formidable rival. Sam'l was a weaver in the Tenements, and Sanders a coal-carter whose trade-mark was a bell on his horse's neck that told when coals were coming. Being something of a public man, Sanders had not perhaps so high a social position as Sam'l, but he had succeeded his father on the coal-cart, while the weaver had already tried several trades. It had always been against Sam'l, too, that once when the kirk was vacant he had advised the selection of the third minister who preached for it on the ground that it came expensive to pay a large number of candidates. The scandal of the thing was hushed up, out of respect for his father, who was a God-fearing man, but Sam'l was known by it in Lang Tammas' circle. The coal-carter was called Little Sanders to distinguish him from his father, who was not much more than half his size. He

had grown up with the name, and its inapplicability now came home to nobody. Sam'l's mother had been more far-seeing than Sanders'. Her man had been called Sammy all his life because it was the name he got as a boy, so when their eldest son was born she spoke of him as Sam'l while still in his cradle. The neighbours imitated her, and thus the young man had a better start in life than had been granted to Sammy, his father.

It was Saturday evening—the night in the week when Auld Licht young men fell in love. Sam'l Dickie, wearing a blue glengarry bonnet with a red ball on the top, came to the door of a one-story house in the Tenements and stood there wriggling, for he was in a suit of tweeds for the first time that week, and did not feel at one with them. When his feeling of being a stranger to himself wore off, he looked up and down the road, which straggles between houses and gardens, and then, picking his way over the puddles, crossed to his father's henhouse and sat down on it. He was now on his way to the square.

Eppie Fargus was sitting on an adjoining dike knitting stockings, and Sam'l looked at her for a time.

"Is't yersel, Eppie?" he said at last.

"It's a' that," said Eppie.

"Hoo's a' wi' ye?" asked Sam'l.

"We're juist aff an' on," replied Eppie cautiously.

There was not much more to say, but as Sam'l sidled off the henhouse he murmured politely,

"Ay, ay." In another minute he would have been fairly started, but Eppie resumed the conversation.

"Sam'l," she said, with a twinkle in her eye, "ye can tell Lisbeth Fargus I'll likely be drappin' in on her aboot Munday or Teisday."

Lisbeth was sister to Eppie, and wife of Tammas McQuhatty, better known as T'nowhead, which was the name of his farm. She was thus Bell's mistress.

Sam'l leaned against the henhouse as if all his desire to depart had gone.

"Hoo d'ye kin I'll be at the T'nowhead the nicht?" he asked, grinning in anticipation.

"Ou, I'se warrant ye'll be after Bell," said Eppie.

"Am no sae sure o' that," said Sam'l, trying to leer. He was enjoying himself now.

"Am no sure o' that," he repeated, for Eppie seemed lost in stitches.

"Sam'l?"

"Ay."

"Ye'll be spierin' her sune noo, I dinna doot?"

This took Sam'l, who had only been courting Bell for a year or two, a little aback.

"Hoo d'ye mean, Eppie?" he asked.

"Maybe ye'll do't the nicht."

"Na, there's nae hurry," said Sam'l.

"Weel, we're a' coontin' on't, Sam'l."

"Gae wa wi' ye."

"What for no?"

"Gae wa wi' ye," said Sam'l again.

"Bell's gie an' fond o' ye, Sam'l."

"Ay," said Sam'l.

"But am dootin' ye're a fell billy wi' the lasses."

"Ay, oh, I d'na kin, moderate, moderate," said Sam'l, in high delight.

"I saw ye," said Eppie, speaking with a wire in her mouth, "gaein' on terr'ble wi' Mysy Haggart at the pump last Saturday."

"We was juist amoosin' oorsels," said Sam'l.

"It'll be nae amoosement to Mysy," said Eppie, "gin ye brak her heart."

"Losh, Eppie," said Sam'l, "I didna think o' that."

"Ye maun kin weel, Sam'l, 'at there's mony a lass wid jump at ye."

"Ou, weel," said Sam'l, implying that a man must take these things as they come.

"For ye're a dainty chield to look at, Sam'l."

"Do ye think so, Eppie? Ay, ay: oh, I d'na kin am onything by the ordinar."

"Ye mayna be," said Eppie, "but lasses doesna do to be ower partikler."

Sam'l resented this, and prepared to depart again.

"Ye'll no tell Bell that?" he asked anxiously.

"Tell her what?"

"Aboot me an' Mysy."

"We'll see hoo ye behave yersel, Sam'l."

"No 'at I care, Eppie; ye can tell her gin ye like. I widna think twice o' tellin her mysel."

"The Lord forgie ye for leein', Sam'l," said Eppie, as he disappeared down Tammy Tosh's close. Here he came upon Henders Webster.

"Ye're late, Sam'l," said Henders.

"What for?"

"Ou, I was thinkin' ye wid be gaen the length o' T'nowhead the nicht, an' I saw Sanders Elshioner makkin's wy there an oor syne."

"Did ye?" cried Sam'l, adding craftily, "but it's naething to me."

"Tod, lad," said Henders, "gin ye dinna buckle to, Sanders'll be carryin' her off."

Sam'l flung back his head and passed on.

"Sam'l!" cried Henders after him.

"Ay," said Sam'l, wheeling round.

"Gie Bell a kiss frae me."

The full force of this joke struck neither all at once. Sam'l began to smile at it as he turned down the school-wynd, and it came upon Henders while he was in his garden feeding his ferret. Then he slapped his legs gleefully, and explained the conceit to Will'um Byars, who went into the house and thought it over.

There were twelve or twenty little groups of men in the square, which was lit by a flare of oil suspended over a cadger's cart. Now and again a staid young woman passed through the square with a basket on her arm, and if she had lingered long enough to give them time, some of the idlers would have addressed her. As it was, they gazed after her, and then grinned to each other.

"Ay, Sam'l," said two or three young men, as Sam'l joined them beneath the town clock.

"Ay, Davit," replied Sam'l.

This group was composed of some of the sharpest wits in Thrums, and it was not to be expected that they would let this opportunity pass. Perhaps when Sam'l joined them he knew what was in store for him.

"Was ye lookin' for T'nowhead's Bell, Sam'l?" asked one.

"Or mebbe ye was wantin' the minister?" suggested another, the same who had walked out twice with Christy Duff and not married her after all.

Sam'l could not think of a good reply at the moment, so he laughed good-naturedly.

"Ondoobtedly she's a snod bit crittur," said Davit archly.

"An' michty clever wi' her fingers," added Jamie Deuchars.

"Man, I've thocht o' makkin' up to Bell mysel," said Peter Ogle. "Wid there be ony chance, think ye, Sam'l?"

"I'm thinkin' she widna hae ye for her first, Pete," replied Sam'l, in one of those happy flashes that come to some men, "but there's nae sayin' but what she micht tak ye to finish up wi'."

The unexpectedness of this sally startled everyone. Though Sam'l did not set up for a wit, however, like Davit, it was notorious that he could say a cutting thing once in a way.

"Did ye ever see Bell reddin' up?" asked Pete,

recovering from his overthrow. He was a man who bore no malice.

"It's a sicht," said Sam'l solemnly.

"Hoo will that be?" asked Jamie Deuchars.

"It's weel worth yer while," said Pete, "to ging atower to the T'nowhead an' see. Ye'll mind the closed-in beds i' the kitchen? Ay, weel, they're a fell spoilt crew, T'nowhead's litlins, an' no that aisy to manage. Th' ither lasses Lisbeth's hae'n had a michty trouble wi' them. When they war i' the middle o' their reddin up the bairns wid come tumlin' about the floor, but, sal, I assure ye, Bell didna fash lang wi' them. Did she, Sam'l?"

"She did not," said Sam'l, dropping into a fine mode of speech to add emphasis to his remark.

"I'll tell ye what she did," said Pete to the others. "She juist lifted up the litlins, twa at a time, an' flung them into the coffin-beds. Syne she snibbit the doors on them, an' keepit them there till the floor was dry."

"Ay, man, did she so?" said Davit admiringly.

"I've seen her do't mysel," said Sam'l.

"There's no a lassie maks better bannocks this side o' Fetter Lums," continued Pete.

"Her mither tocht her that," said Sam'l; "she was a gran' han' at the bakin', Kitty Ogilvy."

"I've heard say," remarked Jamie, putting it this way, so as not to tie himself down to anything, "'at Bell's scones is equal to Mag Lunan's."

"So they are," said Sam'l, almost fiercely.

"I kin she's a neat han' at singein' a hen," said Pete.

"An' wi't a'," said Davit, "she's a snod, canty bit stocky in her Sabbath claes."

"If onything, thick in the waist," suggested Jamie.

"I dinna see that," said Sam'l.

"I d'na care for her hair either," continued Jamie, who was very nice in his tastes; "something mair yallowchy wid be an improvement."

"A'body kins," growled Sam'l, "'at black hair's the bonniest."

The others chuckled.

"Puir Sam'l!" Pete said.

Sam'l not being certain whether this should be received with a smile or a frown, opened his mouth wide as a kind of compromise. This was position one with him for thinking things over.

Few Auld Lichts, as I have said, went the length of choosing a helpmate for themselves. One day a young man's friends would see him mending the washing-tub of a maiden's mother. They kept the joke until Saturday night, and then he learned from them what he had been after. It dazed him for a time, but in a year or so he grew accustomed to the idea, and they were then married. With a little help he fell in love just like other people.

Sam'l was going the way of the others, but he found it difficult to come to the point. He only went courting once a week, and he could never take up the running at the place where he left off the

Saturday before. Thus he had not, so far, made great headway. His method of making up to Bell had been to drop in at T'nowhead on Saturday nights and talk with the farmer about the rinderpest.

The farm kitchen was Bell's testimonial. Its chairs, tables, and stools were scoured by her to the whiteness of Bob Angus's sawmill boards, and the muslin blind on the window was starched like a child's pinafore. Bell was brave, too, as well as energetic. Once Thrums had been overrun with thieves. It is now thought that there may have been only one, but he had the wicked cleverness of a gang. Such was his repute that there were weavers who spoke of locking their doors when they went from home. He was not very skilful, however, being generally caught, and when they said they knew he was a robber he gave them their things back and went away. If they had given him time, there is no doubt that he would have gone off with his plunder. One night he went to T'nowhead, and Bell, who slept in the kitchen, was awakened by the noise. She knew who it would be, so she rose and dressed herself, and went to look for him with a candle. The thief had not known what to do when he got in, and as it was very lonely he was glad to see Bell. She told him he ought to be ashamed of himself, and would not let him out by the door until he had taken off his boots so as not to soil the carpet.

On this Saturday evening, Sam'l stood his

ground in the square, until by and by he found himself alone. There were other groups there still, but his circle had melted away. They went separately, and no one said good-night. Each took himself off slowly, backing out of the group until he was fairly started.

Sam'l looked about him, and then, seeing that the others had gone, walked round the townhouse into the darkness of the brae that leads down and then up to the farm of T'nowhead.

To get into the good graces of Lisbeth Fargus you had to know her ways and humour them. Sam'l, who was a student of women, knew this, and so, instead of pushing the door open and walking in, he went through the rather ridiculous ceremony of knocking. Sanders Elshioner was also aware of this weakness of Lisbeth's, but, though he often made up his mind to knock, the absurdity of the thing prevented his doing so when he reached the door. T'nowhead himself had never got used to his wife's refined notions, and when any one knocked he always started to his feet, thinking there must be something wrong.

Lisbeth came to the door, her expansive figure blocking the way in.

"Sam'l," she said.

"Lisbeth," said Sam'l.

He shook hands with the farmer's wife, knowing that she liked it, but only said "Ay, Bell," to his sweetheart, "Ay, T'nowhead," to McQuhatty, and "It's yersel, Sanders," to his rival.

They were all sitting round the fire, T'now-

head, with his feet on the ribs, wondering why he felt so warm, and Bell darned a stocking, while Lisbeth kept an eye on a goblet full of potatoes.

"Sit into the fire, Sam'l," said the farmer, not, however making way for him.

"Na, na," said Sam'l, "I'm to bide nae time." Then he sat into the fire. His face was turned away from Bell, and when she spoke he answered her without looking round. Sam'l felt a little anxious. Sanders Elshioner, who had one leg shorter than the other, but looked well when sitting, seemed suspiciously at home. He asked Bell questions out of his own head, which was beyond Sam'l, and once he said something to her in such a low voice that the others could not catch it. T'nowhead asked curiously what it was, and Sanders explained that he had only said, "Ay, Bell, the morn's the Sabbath." There was nothing startling in this, but Sam'l did not like it. He began to wonder if he was too late, and, had he seen his opportunity, would have told Bell of a nasty rumour that Sanders intended to go over to the Free Church if they would make him kirk-officer.

Sam'l had the good-will of T'nowhead's wife, who liked a polite man. Sanders did his best, but from want of practice he constantly made mistakes. To-night, for instance, he wore his hat in the house because he did not like to put up his hand and take it off. T'nowhead had not taken his off either, but that was because he meant to go out by and by and lock the byre door. It

was impossible to say which of her lovers Bell preferred. The proper course with an Auld Licht lassie was to prefer the man who proposed to her.

"Ye'll bide a wee, an' hae something to eat?" Lisbeth asked Sam'l, with her eyes on the goblet.

"No, I thank ye," said Sam'l, with a true gentility.

"Ye'll better?"

"I dinna think it."

"Hoots aye; what's to hender ye?"

"Weel, since ye're sae pressin', I'll bide."

No one asked Sanders to stay. Bell could not, for she was but the servant, and T'nowhead knew that the kick his wife had given him meant that he was not to do so either. Sanders whistled to show that he was not uncomfortable.

"Ay, then, I'll be stappin' ower the brae," he said at last.

He did not go, however. There was sufficient pride in him to get him off his chair, but only slowly, for he had to get accustomed to the notion of going. At intervals of two or three minutes he remarked that he must now be going. In the same circumstances Sam'l would have acted similarly. For a Thrums man it is one of the hardest things in life to get away from anywhere.

At last Lisbeth saw that something must be done. The potatoes were burning, and T'nowhead had an invitation on his tongue.

"Yes, I'll hae to be movin'," said Sanders, hopelessly, for the fifth time.

"Guid nicht to ye, then, Sanders," said Lisbeth. "Gie the door a fling-to, ahent ye."

Sanders, with a mighty effort, pulled himself together. He looked boldly at Bell, and then took off his hat carefully. Sam'l saw with misgivings that there was something in it which was not a handkerchief. It was a paper bag glittering with gold braid, and contained such an assortment of sweets as lads bought for their lasses on the Muckle Friday.

"Hae, Bell," said Sanders, handing the bag to Bell in an offhand way as if it were but a trifle. Nevertheless, he was a little excited, for he went off without saying good-night.

No one spoke. Bell's face was crimson. T'nowhead fidgeted on his chair, and Lisbeth looked at Sam'l. The weaver was strangely calm and collected, though he would have liked to know whether this was a proposal.

"Sit in by to the table, Sam'l," said Lisbeth, trying to look as if things were as they had been before.

She put a saucerful of butter, salt, and pepper near the fire to melt, for melted butter is the shoeing-horn that helps over a meal of potatoes. Sam'l, however, saw what the hour required, and jumping up, he seized his bonnet.

"Hing the tatties higher up the joist, Lisbeth," he said with dignity; "I'se be back in ten meenits."

He hurried out of the house, leaving the others looking at each other.

"What do ye think?" asked Lisbeth.

"I d'na kin," faltered Bell.

"Thae tatties is lang o' comin to the boil," said T'nowhead.

In some circles a lover who behaved like Sam'l would have been suspected of intent upon his rival's life, but neither Bell nor Lisbeth did the weaver that injustice. In a case of this kind it did not much matter what T'nowhead thought.

The ten minutes had barely passed when Sam'l was back in the farm kitchen. He was too flurried to knock this time, and, indeed, Lisbeth did not expect it of him.

"Bell, hae!" he cried, handing his sweetheart a tinsel bag twice the size of Sanders' gift.

"Losh preserve's!" exclaimed Lisbeth: "I'se warrant there's a shillin's worth."

"There's a' that, Lisbeth—an' mair," said Sam'l firmly.

"I thank ye, Sam'l," said Bell, feeling an unwonted elation as she gazed at the two paper bags in her lap.

"Ye're ower extravegint, Sam'l," Lisbeth said.

"Not at all," said Sam'l; "not at all. But I widna advise ye to eat thae ither anes, Bell—they're second quality."

Bell drew back a step from Sam'l.

"How do ye kin?" asked the farmer shortly, for he liked Sanders.

"I spiered i' the shop," said Sam'l.

The goblet was placed on a broken plate on the table with the saucer beside it, and Sam'l, like the others, helped himself. What he did was to

take potatoes from the pot with his fingers, peel off their coats, and then dip them into the butter. Lisbeth would have liked to provide knives and forks, but she knew that beyond a certain point T'nowhead was master in his own house. As for Sam'l he felt victory in his hands, and began to think that he had gone too far.

In the meantime, Sanders, little witting that Sam'l had trumped his trick, was sauntering along the kirk-wynd with his hat on the side of his head. Fortunately he did not meet the minister.

The courting of T'nowhead's Bell reached its crisis one Sabbath about a month after the events above recorded. The minister was in great force that day, but it is no part of mine to tell how he bore himself. I was there, and am not likely to forget the scene. It was a fateful Sabbath for T'nowhead's Bell and her swains, and destined to be remembered for the painful scandal which they perpetrated in their passion.

Bell was not in the kirk. There being an infant of six months in the house, it was a question of either Lisbeth or the lassie's staying at home with him, and though Lisbeth was unselfish in a general way, she could not resist the delight of going to church. She had nine children besides the baby, and being but a woman, it was the pride of her life to march them into the T'nowhead pew, so well watched that they dared not misbehave, and so tightly packed that they could not fall. The congregation looked at that pew, the mothers enviously, when they sang the lines;

Jerusalem like a city is
Compactly built together.

The first half of the service had been gone through on this particular Sunday without anything remarkable happening. It was at the end of the psalm which preceded the sermon that Sanders Elshioner, who sat near the door, lowered his head until it was no higher than the pews, and in that attitude, looking almost like a four-footed animal, slipped out of the church. In their eagerness to be at the sermon many of the congregation did not notice him, and these who did put the matter by in their minds for future investigation. Sam'l, however, could not take it so coolly. From his seat in the gallery he saw Sanders disappear, and his mind misgave him. With the true lover's instinct he understood it all. Sanders had been struck by the fine turn-out in the T'nowhead pew. Bell was alone at the farm. What an opportunity to work one's way up to a proposal! T'nowhead was so overrun with children that such a chance seldom occurred, except on a Sabbath. Sanders, doubtless, was off to propose, and he, Sam'l, was left behind.

The suspense was terrible. Sam'l and Sanders had both known all along that Bell would take the first of the two who asked her. Even those who thought her proud admitted that she was modest. Bitterly the weaver repented having waited so long. Now it was too late. In ten minutes Sanders would be at T'nowhead; in an

hour all would be over. Sam'l rose to his feet in a daze. His mother pulled him down by the coat-tail, and his father shook him, thinking he was walking in his sleep. He tottered past them, however, hurried up the aisle, which was so narrow that Dan'l Ross could only reach his seat by walking sideways, and was gone before the minister could do more than stop in the middle of a whirl and gape in horror after him.

A number of the congregation felt that day the advantage of sitting in the loft. What was a mystery to those downstairs was revealed to them. From the gallery windows they had a fine open view of the south; and as Sam'l took the common, which was a short cut though a steep ascent to T'nowhead, he was never out of their line of vision. Sanders was not to be seen, but they guessed rightly the reason why. Thinking he had ample time, he had gone round by the main road to save his boots—perhaps a little scared by what was coming. Sam'l's design was to forestall him by taking the shorter path over the burn and up the common.

It was a race for a wife, and several onlookers in the gallery braved the minister's displeasure to see who won. Those who favoured Sam'l's suit exultingly saw him leap the stream, while the friends of Sanders fixed their eyes on the top of the common where it ran into the road. Sanders must come into sight there, and the one who reached this point first would get Bell.

As Auld Lichts do not walk abroad on the Sab-

bath, Sanders would probably not be delayed. The chances were in his favour. Had it been any other day in the week Sam'l might have run. So some of the congregation in the gallery were thinking, when suddenly they saw him bend low and then take to his heels. He had caught sight of Sanders's head nodding over the hedge that separated the road from the common, and feared that Sanders might see him. The members of the congregation who could crane their necks sufficiently saw a black object, which they guessed to be the carter's hat, crawling along the hedge-top. For a moment it was motionless, and then it shot ahead. The rivals had seen each other. It was now a hot race. Sam'l, dissembling no longer, clattered up the common, becoming smaller and smaller to the onlookers as he neared the top. More than one person in the gallery almost rose to their feet in their excitement. Sam'l had it. No, Sanders was in front. Then the two figures disappeared from view. They seemed to run into each other at the top of the brae, and no one could say who was first. The congregation looked at one another. Some of them perspired. But the minister held on his course.

Sam'l had just been in time to cut Sanders out. It was the weaver's saving that Sanders saw this when his rival turned the corner; for Sam'l was sadly blown. Sanders took in the situation and gave in at once. The last hundred yards of the distance he covered at his leisure, and when he

arrived at his destination he did not go in. It was a fine afternoon for the time of year, and he went round to have a look at the pig, about which T'nowhead was a little sinfully puffed up.

"Ay," said Sanders, digging his fingers critically into the grunting animal; "quite so."

"Grumph," said the pig, getting reluctantly to his feet.

"Ou, ay; yes," said Sanders, thoughtfully.

Then he sat down on the edge of the sty, and looked long and silently at an empty bucket. But whether his thoughts were of T'nowhead's Bell, whom he had lost forever, or of the food the farmer fed his pig on, is not known.

"Lord preserve's! Are ye no at the kirk?" cried Bell, nearly dropping the baby as Sam'l broke into the room.

"Bell!" cried Sam'l.

Then T'nowhead's Bell knew that her hour had come.

"Sam'l," she faltered.

"Will ye hae's, Bell?" demanded Sam'l, glaring at her sheepishly.

"Ay," answered Bell.

Sam'l fell into a chair.

"Bring's a drink o' water, Bell," he said.

But Bell thought the occasion required milk, and there was none in the kitchen. She went out to the byre, still with the baby in her arms, and saw Sanders Elshioner sitting gloomily on the pigsty.

"Weel, Bell," said Sanders.

"I thocht ye'd been at the kirk, Sanders," said Bell.

Then there was a silence between them.

"Has Sam'l spiered ye, Bell?" asked Sanders, stolidly.

"Ay," said Bell again, and this time there was a tear in her eye. Sanders was little better than an "orra man," and Sam'l was a weaver, and yet —— But it was too late now. Sanders gave the pig a vicious poke with a stick, and when it had ceased to grunt Bell was back in the kitchen. She had forgotten about the milk, however, and Sam'l only got water after all.

In after days, when the story of Bell's wooing was told, there were some who held that the circumstances would have almost justified the lassie in giving Sam'l the go-by. But these perhaps forgot that her other lover was in the same predicament as the accepted one—that of the two, indeed, he was the more to blame, for he set off to T'nowhead on the Sabbath of his own accord, while Sam'l only ran after him. And then there is no one to say for certain whether Bell heard of her suitors' delinquencies until Lisbeth's return from the kirk. Sam'l could never remember whether he told her, and Bell was not sure whether, if he did, she took it in. Sanders was greatly in demand for weeks after to tell what he knew of the affair, but though he was twice asked to tea to the manse among the trees, and subjected thereafter to ministerial cross-examinations, this is all

he told. He remained at the pigsty until Sam'l left the farm, when he joined him at the top of the brae, and they went home together.

"It's yersel, Sanders," said Sam'l.

"It is so, Sam'l," said Sanders.

"Very cauld," said Sam'l.

"Blawy," assented Sanders.

After a pause:

"Sam'l," said Sanders.

"Ay."

"I'm hearin' yer to be mairit."

"Ay."

"Weel, Sam'l, she's a snod bit lassie."

"Thank ye," said Sam'l.

"I had ance a kin' o' notion o' Bell mysel," continued Sanders.

"Ye had?"

"Yes, Sam'l; but I thocht better o't."

"Hoo d'ye mean?" asked Sam'l a little anxiously.

"Weel, Sam'l, mairitch is a terrible responsibeelity."

"It is so," said Sam'l, wincing.

"An' no the thing to tak up withoot conseederation."

"But it's a blessed and honourable state, Sanders; ye've heard the minister on't."

"They say," continued the relentless Sanders, "'at the minister doesna get on sair wi' the wife himsel."

"So they do," cried Sam'l, with a sinking at the heart.

"I've been telt," Sanders went on, "'at gin ye can get the upper han' o' the wife for a while at first, there's the mair chance o' a harmonious exeestence."

"Bell's no the lassie," said Sam'l, appealingly, "to thwart her man."

Sanders smiled.

"D'ye think she is, Sanders?"

"Weel, Sam'l, I d'na want to fluster ye, but she's been ower lang wi' Lisbeth Fargus no to hae learnt her ways. An' a'body kins what a life T'nowhead has wi' her."

"Guid sake, Sanders, hoo did ye no speak o' this afore?"

"I thocht ye kent o't, Sam'l."

They had now reached the square, and the U. P. kirk was coming out. The Auld Licht kirk would be half an hour yet.

"But, Sanders," said Sam'l, brightening up, "ye was on yer wy to spier her yersel."

"I was, Sam'l," said Sanders, "and I canna but be thankfu' ye was ower quick for's."

"Gin't hadna been you," said Sam'l, "I wid never hae thocht o't."

"I'm sayin' naething agin Bell," pursued the other, "but, man Sam'l, a body should be mair deleeberate in a thing o' the kind."

"It was michty hurried," said Sam'l, woefully.

"It's a serious thing to spier a lassie," said Sanders.

"It's an awfu' thing," said Sam'l.

"But we'll hope for the best," added Sanders, in a hopeless voice.

They were close to the Tenements now, and Sam'l looked as if he were on his way to be hanged.

"Sam'l?"

"Ay, Sanders."

"Did ye—did ye kiss her, Sam'l?"

"Na."

"Hoo?"

"There's was verra little time, Sanders."

"Half an 'oor," said Sanders.

"Was there? Man, Sanders, to tell ye the truth, I never thocht o't."

Then the soul of Sanders Elshioner was filled with contempt for Sam'l Dickie.

The scandal blew over. At first it was expected that the minister would interfere to prevent the union, but beyond intimating from the pulpit that the souls of Sabbath-breakers were beyond praying for, and then praying for Sam'l and Sanders, at great length, with a word thrown in for Bell, he let things take their course. Some said it was because he was always frightened lest his young men should intermarry with other denominations, but Sanders explained it differently to Sam'l.

"I hav'na a word to say agin the minister," he said; "they're gran' prayers, but, Sam'l, he's a mairit man himsel."

"He's a' the better for that, Sanders, isn' he?"

"Do ye no see," asked Sanders, compassionately, "'at he's tryin' to mak the best o't?"

"Oh, Sanders, man!" said Sam'l.

"Cheer up, Sam'l," said Sanders, "it'll sune be ower."

Their having been rival suitors had not interfered with their friendship. On the contrary, while they had hitherto been mere acquaintances, they became inseparables as the wedding day drew near. It was noticed that they had much to say to each other, and that when they could not get a room to themselves they wandered about together in the churchyard. When Sam'l had anything to tell Bell he sent Sanders to tell it, and Sanders did as he was bid. There was nothing that he would not have done for Sam'l.

The more obliging Sanders was, however, the sadder Sam'l grew. He never laughed now on Saturdays, and sometimes his loom was silent half the day. Sam'l felt that Sanders's was the kindness of a friend for a dying man.

It was to be a penny wedding, and Lisbeth Fargus said it was delicacy that made Sam'l superintend the fitting-up of the barn by deputy. Once he came to see it in person, but he looked so ill that Sanders had to see him home. This was on the Thursday afternoon, and the wedding was fixed for Friday.

"Sanders, Sanders," said Sam'l, in a voice strangely unlike his own, "it'll a' be ower by this time the morn."

"It will," said Sanders.

"If I had only kent her langer," continued Sam'l.

"It wid hae been safer," said Sanders.

"Did ye see the yallow floor in Bell's bonnet?" asked the accepted swain.

"Ay," said Sanders, reluctantly.

"I'm dootin'—I'm sair dootin' she's but a flichty, licht-hearted crittur after a'."

"I had ay my suspeecions o't," said Sanders.

"Ye hae kent her langer than me," said Sam'l.

"Yes," said Sanders, "but there's nae gettin' at the heart o' women. Man, Sam'l, they're desperate cunnin'."

"I'm dootin't; I'm sair dootin't."

"It'll be a warnin' to ye, Sam'l, no to be in sic a hurry i' the futur," said Sanders.

Sam'l groaned.

"Ye'll be gaein' up to the manse to arrange wi' the minister the morn's mornin'," continued Sanders, in a subdued voice.

Sam'l looked wistfully at his friend.

"I canna do't, Sanders," he said, "I canna do't."

"Ye maun," said Sanders.

"It's aisy to speak," retorted Sam'l bitterly.

"We have a' oor troubles, Sam'l," said Sanders, soothingly, "an' every man maun bear his ain burdens. Johnny Davie's wife's dead, an' he's no repinin'."

"Ay," said Sam'l, "but a death's no a mairitch. We hae haen deaths in our family too."

"It may a' be for the best," added Sanders, "an' there wid be a michty talk i' the hale countryside gin ye didna ging to the minister like a man."

"I maun hae langer to think o't," said Sam'l.

"Bell's mairitch is the morn," said Sanders, decisively.

Sam'l glanced up with a wild look in his eyes.

"Sanders," he cried.

"Sam'l?"

"Ye hae been a guid friend to me, Sanders, in this sair affliction."

"Nothing ava," said Sanders; "dount mention'd."

"But, Sanders, ye canna deny but what your rinnin oot o' the kirk that awfu' day was at the bottom o'd a'."

"It was so," said Sanders, bravely.

"An' ye used to be fond o' Bell, Sanders."

"I dinna deny't."

"Sanders, laddie," said Sam'l, bending forward and speaking in a wheedling voice, "I aye thocht it was you she likeit."

"I had some sic idea mysel," said Sanders.

"Sanders, I canna think to pairt twa fowk sae weel suited to ane anither as you an' Bell."

"Canna ye, Sam'l?"

"She wid make ye a guid wife, Sanders. I hae studied her weel, and she's a thrifty, douce, clever lassie. Sanders, there's no the like o' her. Mony a time, Sanders, I hae said to mysel, There's a lass ony man micht be prood to tak. A'body says the same, Sanders. There's nae risk ava, man: nane to speak o'. Tak her, laddie, tak her, Sanders; it's a grand chance, Sanders. She's yours for the spierin'. I'll gie her up, Sanders."

"Will ye, though?" said Sanders.

"What d'ye think?" asked Sam'l.

"If ye wid rayther," said Sanders, politely.

"There's my han' on't," said Sam'l. "Bless ye, Sanders; ye've been a true frien' to me."

Then they shook hands for the first time in their lives; and soon afterward Sanders struck up the brae to T'nowhead.

Next morning Sanders Elshioner, who had been very busy the night before, put on his Sabbath clothes and strolled up to the manse.

"But—but where is Sam'l?" asked the minister; "I must see himself."

"It's a new arrangement," said Sanders.

"What do you mean, Sanders?"

"Bell's to marry me," explained Sanders.

"But—but what does Sam'l say?"

"He's willin'," said Sanders.

"And Bell?"

"She's willin', too. She prefers't."

"It is unusual," said the minister.

"It's a' richt," said Sanders.

"Well, you know best," said the minister.

"You see the house was taen, at ony rate," continued Sanders. "An' I'll juist ging in til't instead o' Sam'l."

"Quite so."

"An' I cudna think to disappoint the lassie."

"Your sentiments do you credit, Sanders," said the minister; "but I hope you do not enter upon the blessed state of matrimony without full consideration of its responsibilities. It is a serious business—marriage."

"It's a' that," said Sanders, "but I'm willin' to stan' the risk."

So, as soon as it could be done, Sanders Elshioner took to wife T'nowhead's Bell, and I remember seeing Sam'l Dickie trying to dance at the penny wedding.

Years afterward it was said in Thrums that Sam'l had treated Bell badly, but he was never sure about it himself.

"It was a near thing—a michty near thing," he admitted in the square.

"They say," some other weaver would remark, "'at it was you Bell liked best."

"I d'na kin," Sam'l would reply, "but there's nae doot the lassie was fell fond o' me. Ou, a mere passin' fancy's ye micht say."

JAMES MATTHEW BARRIE.

ULYSSES AND NAUSICAA

Book VI of the Odyssey of Homer

ARGUMENT

[Pallas appearing in a dream to Nausicaa (the daughter of Alcinoüs, king of Phæacia), commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of state, in preparation for her nuptials. Nausicaa goes with her handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses, who, addressing himself to the princess, is by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.]

WHILE thus the weary wanderer sunk to rest,
And peaceful slumbers calmed his anxious breast,
The martial maid from heaven's aërial height
Swift to Phæacia wing'd her rapid flight.
In elder times the soft Phæacian train
In ease possess'd the wide Hyperian plain;
Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose
A lawless nation of gigantic foes:
Then great Nausithous from Hyperia far,
Through seas retreating from the sounds of war,
The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,
Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head;
There round his tribes a strength of wall he raised;
To heaven the glittering domes and temples blazed:

Just to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds,
And shared the lands, and gave the lands their bounds.
Now in the silent grave the monarch lay,
And wise Alcinoüs held the legal sway.
To his high palace through the fields of air
The goddess shot; Ulysses was her care.
There, as the night in silence roll'd away,
A heaven of charms divine Nausicaa lay:
Through the thick gloom the shining portals blaze;
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace,
Light as the viewless air the warrior maid
Glides through the valves, and hovers round her head;
A favorite virgin's blooming form she took,
From Dymas sprung, and thus the vision spoke:
"Oh Indolent! to waste thy hours away!
And sleep'st thou careless of the bridal day?
Thy spousal ornament neglected lies;
Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise!
A just applause the cares of dress impart,
And give soft transport to a parent's heart.
Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way,
When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray:
Haste to the stream! companion of thy care,
Lo, I thy steps attend, thy labors share.
Virgin, awake! the marriage hour is nigh,
See from their thrones thy kindred monarchs sigh!
The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order mules obedient to the rein;

For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave,
Where their fair vests Phæacian virgins lave,
In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great
And majesty derives a grace from state."
Then to the palaces of heaven she sails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales;
The seat of gods; the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease.
There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapors rise;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose;
The firmament with living splendors glows.
Hither the goddess winged the aërial way,
Through heaven's eternal gates that blazed with day.
Now from her rosy car Aurora shed
The dawn, and all the orient flamed with red.
Up rose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night.
The queen she sought, the queen her hours bestowed
In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd
With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.
Meanwhile Phæacia's peers in council sate;
From his high dome the king descends in state:
Then with a filial awe the royal maid
Approach'd him passing, and submissive said:
"Will my dread sire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal car obtain?
Say, with my garments shall I bend my way?
Where through the vales the mazy waters stray?

A dignity of dress adorns the great,
And kings draw lustre from the robe of state.
Five sons thou hast; three wait the bridal day,
And spotless robes become the young and gay:
So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
By these my cares adorn'd, that praise is mine."
Thus she: but blushes ill-restrain'd betray
Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day,
The conscious sire the dawning blush survey'd,
And, smiling, thus bespoke the blooming maid:
"My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give."
Swift at the royal nod the attending train
The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.
The blooming virgin with despatchful cares
Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial, bears.
The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
The sumptuous viands, and the flavorous wines.
The train prepare a cruse of curious mould,
A cruse of fragrance, form'd of burnish'd gold;
Odor divine! whose soft refreshing streams
Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.
Now mounting the gay seat, the silken reins
Shine in her hand; along the sounding plains
Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone;
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.
They seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;
Where, gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious bason fills.
The mules, unharness'd, range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.

Then emulous the royal robes they lave,
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave
(The vestures cleansed o'erspread the shelly sand,
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand);
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil;
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play
(Their shining veils unbound). Along the skies,
Toss'd and retoss'd, the ball incessant flies.
They sport, they feast; Nausicaa lifts her voice,
And, warbling sweet, makes earth and heaven rejoice.
As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
Or wide Täygetus' resounding groves;
A sylvan train the huntress queen surrounds,
Her rattling quiver from her shoulders sounds;
Fierce in the sport, along the mountain's brow
They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe;
High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,
Above the nymphs she treads with stately grace:
Distinguish'd excellence the goddess proves;
Exults Latona as the virgin moves.
With equal grace Nausicaa trod the plain,
And shone transcendent o'er the beauteous train.
Meantime (the care and favorite of the skies)
Wrapp'd in imbowering shade, Ulysses lies,
His woes forgot! but Pallas now address'd
To break the bands of all-composing rest.
Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw
The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,

And swam the stream; loud shrieks the virgin train,
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.
Waked by the shrilling sound, Ulysses rose,
And, to the deaf woods wailing, breathed his woes:
"Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,
On what new region is Ulysses toss'd;
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms;
Or men, whose bosom tender pity warms?
What sounds are these that gather from the shores?
The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bowers,
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood;
Or azure daughters of the silver flood;
Or human voice? but issuing from the shades,
Why cease I straight to learn what sound invades?"
Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends,
With forceful strength a branch the hero rends;
Around his loins the verdant cincture spreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing shades.
As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wintry showers,
Descends terrific from the mountain's brow;
With living flames his rolling eyeballs glow;
With conscious strength elate, he bends his way,
Majestically fierce, to seize his prey
(The steer or stag;) or, with keen hunger bold,
Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold.
No less a terror, from the neighboring groves
(Rough from the tossing surge) Ulysses moves;
Urged on by want, and recent from the storms;
The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.

Wide o'er the shore with many a piercing cry
To rocks, to caves, the frightened virgins fly;
All but the nymph; the nymph stood fix'd alone,
By Pallas arm'd with boldness not her own.
Meantime in dubious thought the king awaits,
And, self-considering, as he stands, debates;
Distant his mournful story to declare,
Or prostrate at her knee address the prayer.
But fearful to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid:
"If from the skies a goddess, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend! If in that bright disguise
Thou visit earth, a daughter of the skies,
Hail, Dian, hail! the huntress of the groves
So shines majestic, and so stately moves,
So breathes an air divine! But if thy race
Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
Blest is the father from whose loins you sprung,
Blest is the mother at whose breast you hung,
Blest are the brethren who thy blood divide,
To such a miracle of charms allied:
Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
When stately in the dance you swim the harmonious maze.
But blest o'er all, the youth with heavenly charms,
Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms!
Never, I never view'd till this blest hour
Such finish'd grace! I gaze, and I adore!
Thus seems the palm, with stately honors crown'd
By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;

The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coast,
I voyaged, leader of a warrior-host,
But ah, how changed! from thence my sorrow flows;
O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!)
Raptured I stood, and as this hour amazed,
With reverence at the lofty wonder gazed:
Raptured I stand! for earth ne'er knew to bear
A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.
Awed from access, I lift my suppliant hands;
For Misery, O queen! before thee stands.
Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd
To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
Heaven bade the deep to spare; but heaven, my foe,
Spares only to inflict some mightier woe.
Inured to cares, to death in all its forms;
Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms.
Once more I view the face of human kind:
Oh let soft pity touch thy generous mind!
Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
Naked, defenceless on a narrow land.
Propitious to my wants, a vest supply
To guard the wretched from the inclement sky:
So may the gods, who heaven and earth control,
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed;
Blest with a husband be thy bridal bed;
Blest be thy husband with a blooming race,
And lasting union crown your blissful days.
The gods, when they supremely bless, bestow
Firm union on their favorites below:

Then envy grieves, with inly pining hate;
The good exult, and heaven is in our state."
To whom the nymph: "O stranger, cease thy care;
Wise is thy soul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
And the good suffers, while the bad prevails.
Bear, with a soul resign'd, the will of Jove;
Who breathes, must mourn: thy woes are from above.
But since thou tread'st our hospitable shore,
'Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide.
Know, the Phæacian tribes this land divide;
From great Alcinoüs' royal loins I spring,
A happy nation, and a happy king."
Then to her maids: "Why, why, ye coward train,
These fears, this flight? ye fear, and fly in vain.
Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread,
'Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread;
Safe in the love of heaven, an ocean flows
Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
'Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve,
Cheer the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent;
And what to those we give to Jove is lent.
Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams."
Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
To the calm current of the secret tide;
Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,
A vest and robe, with rich embroidery gay

Then unguents in a vase of gold supply,
That breathed a fragrance through the balmy sky.
  To them the king: "No longer I detain
Your friendly care: retire, ye virgin train!
Retire, while from my wearied limbs I lave
The foul pollution of the briny wave.
Ye gods! since this worn frame refection knew,
What scenes have I surveyed of dreadful view!
But, nymphs, recede! sage chastity denies
To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes."
  The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide
O'er all his limbs his hands the waves diffuse,
And from his locks compress the weedy ooze;
The balmy oil, a fragrant shower, he sheds;
Then, dressed, in pomp magnificently treads.
The warrior-goddess gives his frame to shine
With majesty enlarged, and air divine:
Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.
As by some artist, to whom Vulcan gives
His skill divine, a breathing statue lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wondrous mould,
And o'er the silver pours the fusile gold.
So Pallas his heroic frame improves
With heavenly bloom, and like a god he moves.
A fragrance breathes around; majestic grace
Attends his steps: the astonished virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murmuring seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.
  The wondering nymph his glorious port survey'd,
And to her damsels, with amazement, said:

"Not without care divine the stranger treads
This land of joy; his steps some godhead leads:
Would Jove destroy him, sure he had been driven
Far from this realm, the favorite isle of heaven.
Late, a sad spectacle of woe, he trod
The desert sands, and now he looks a god.
Oh heaven! in my connubial hour decree
This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!
But haste, the viands and the bowl provide."
The maids the viands and the bowl supplied:
Eager he fed, for keen his hunger raged,
And with the generous vintage thirst assuaged.
Now on return her care Nausicaa bends,
The robes resumes, the glittering car ascends,
Far blooming o'er the field; and as she press'd
The splendid seat, the listening chief address'd:
"Stranger, arise! the sun rolls down the day,
Lo, to the palace I direct thy way;
Where, in high state, the nobles of the land
Attend my royal sire, a radiant band.
But hear, though wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and every action guides;
Advance at distance, while I pass the plain
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:
Alone I reascend—With airy mounds
A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:
The jutting land two ample bays divides:
Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides;
The spacious basons arching rocks enclose,
A sure defence from every storm that blows.
Close to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;
And near, a forum flank'd with marble shines,

Where the bold youth, the numerous fleets to store,
Shape the broad sail, or smooth the taper oar:
For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
But the tall mast above the vessel rear,
Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air.
They rush into the deep with eager joy,
Climb the steep surge, and through the tempest fly;
A proud, unpolish'd race—To me belongs
The care to shun the blast of slanderous tongues;
Lest malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
Thus with wild censure taint my spotless name:
'What stranger this whom thus Nausicaa leads!
Heavens, with what graceful majesty he treads!
Perhaps a native of some distant shore,
The future consort of her bridal hour:
Or rather some descendant of the skies:
Won by her prayer, the aërial bridegroom flies,
Heaven on that hour its choicest influence shed,
That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed!
All, all the godlike worthies that adorn
This realm, she flies: Phæacia is her scorn.'
And just the blame: for female innocence
Not only flies the guilt, but shuns the offence:
The unguarded virgin, as unchaste, I blame;
And the least freedom with the sex is shame,
Till our consenting sires a spouse provide,
And public nuptials justify the bride,
But would'st thou soon review thy native plain?
Attend, and speedy thou shalt pass the main:
Nigh where a grove with verdant poplars crown'd,
To Pallas sacred, shades the holy ground,

We bend our way; a bubbling fount distills
A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills;
Around the grove, a mead with lively green
Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene;
Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours;
And there the garden yields a waste of flowers.
Hence lies the town, as far as to the ear
Floats a strong shout along the waves of air.
There wait embower'd, while I ascend alone
To great Alcinoüs on his royal throne.
Arrived, advance, impatient of delay,
And to the lofty palace bend thy way:
The lofty palace overlooks the town,
From every dome by pomp superior known;
A child may point the way. With earnest gait
Seek thou the queen along the rooms of state;
Her royal hand a wondrous work designs,
Around a circle of bright damsels shines;
Part twist the threads, and part the wool dispose,
While with the purple orb the spindle glows.
High on a throne, amid the Scherian powers,
My royal father shares the genial hours;
But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose,
With the prevailing eloquence of woes:
So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore,
Though mountains rise between and oceans roar."
  She added not, but waving, as she wheel'd,
The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
With skill the virgin guides the embroider'd rein,
Slow rolls the car before the attending train.
Now whirling down the heavens, the golden day
Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray;

The grove they reach, where, from the sacred
  shade,
To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd:
  "Daughter of Jove! whose arms in thunder wield
The avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield;
Forsook by thee, in vain I sought thy aid
When booming billows closed above my head;
Attend, unconquer'd maid! accord my vows,
Bid the Great hear, and pitying, heal my woes."
  This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly
(By Neptune awed) apparent from the sky:
Stern god! who raged with vengeance unrestrain'd,
Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.

HOMER.

(*Translation by Alexander Pope*)

MY MOTHER*

GOD made my mother on an April day,
From sorrow and the mist along the sea,
Lost birds' and wanderers' songs and ocean spray,
And the moon loved her wandering jealously.

Beside the ocean's din she combed her hair,
Singing the nocturne of the passing ships,
Before her earthly lover found her there
And kissed away the music from her lips.

She came unto the hills and saw the change
That brings the swallow and the geese in turns.
But there was not a grief she deemèd strange,
For that is that in her which always mourns.

Kind heart she has for all on hill or wave
Whose hopes grew wings like ants to fly away.
I bless the God Who such a mother gave
This poor bird-hearted singer of a day.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

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SONGS FOR MY MOTHER

I

Her Hands

MY MOTHER'S hands are cool and fair,
They can do anything,
Delicate mercies hide them there
Like flowers in the spring.

When I was small and could not sleep,
She used to come to me,
And with my cheek upon her hand
How sure my rest would be.

For everything she ever touched
Of beautiful or fine,
Their memories living in her hands
Would warm that sleep of mine.

Her hands remember how they played
One time in meadow streams,
And all the flickering song and shade
Of water took my dreams.

Swift through her haunted fingers pass
Memories of garden things;
I dipped my face in flowers and grass
And sounds of hidden wings.

One time she touched the cloud that kissed
  Brown pastures bleak and far;
I leaned my cheek into a mist
  And thought I was a star.

All this was very long ago
  And I am grown; but yet
The hand that lured my slumber so
  I never can forget.

For still when drowsiness comes on
  It seems so soft and cool,
Shaped happily beneath my cheek,
  Hollow and beautiful.

II

Her Words

My mother has the prettiest tricks
  Of words and words and words.
Her talk comes out as smooth and sleek
  As breasts of singing birds.

She shapes her speech all silver fine
  Because she loves it so.
And her own eyes begin to shine
  To hear her stories grow.

And if she goes to make a call
  Or out to take a walk
We leave our work when she returns
  And run to hear her talk.

We had not dreamed these things were so
  Of sorrow and of mirth.
Her speech is as a thousand eyes
  Through which we see the earth.

God wove a web of loveliness,
  Of clouds and stars and birds,
But made not any thing at all
  So beautiful as words.

They shine around our simple earth
  With golden shadowings,
And every common thing they touch
  Is exquisite with wings.

There's nothing poor and nothing small
  But is made fair with them.
They are the hands of living faith
  That touch the garment's hem.

They are as fair as bloom or air,
  They shine like any star,
And I am rich who learned from her
  How beautiful they are.

ANNA HEMPSTEAD BRANCH.

THE GENTLE BOY

IN THE course of the year 1656, several of the people called Quakers, led, as they professed, by the inward movement of the spirit, made their appearance in New England. Their reputation,

as holders of mystic and pernicious principles, having spread before them, the Puritans early endeavored to banish, and to prevent the further intrusion of the rising sect. But the measures by which it was intended to purge the land of heresy, though more than sufficiently vigorous, were entirely unsuccessful. The Quakers, esteeming persecution as a divine call to the post of danger, laid claim to a holy courage, unknown to the Puritans themselves, who had shunned the cross, by providing for the peaceable exercise of their religion in a distant wilderness. Though it was the singular fact, that every nation of the earth rejected the wandering enthusiasts who practised peace towards all men, the place of greatest uneasiness and peril, and therefore, in their eyes the most eligible, was the province of Massachusetts Bay.

The fines, imprisonments, and stripes, liberally distributed by our pious forefathers; the popular antipathy, so strong that it endured nearly a hundred years after actual persecution had ceased, were attractions as powerful for the Quakers, as peace, honor, and reward, would have been for the worldly minded. Every European vessel brought new cargoes of the sect, eager to testify against the oppression which they hoped to share; and when shipmasters were restrained by heavy fines from affording them passage, they made long and circuitous journeys through the Indian country, and appeared in the province as if conveyed by a supernatural power. Their enthusiasm, height-

ened almost to madness by the treatment which they received, produced actions contrary to the rules of decency, as well as of rational religion, and presented a singular contrast to the calm and staid deportment of their sectarian successors of the present day. The command of the spirit, inaudible except to the soul, and not to be controverted on grounds of human wisdom, was made a plea for most indecorous exhibitions, which, abstractedly considered, well deserved the moderate chastisement of the rod. These extravagances, and the persecution which was at once their cause and consequence, continued to increase, till, in the year 1659, the government of Massachusetts Bay indulged two members of the Quaker sect with the crown of martyrdom.

An indelible stain of blood is upon the hands of all who consented to this act, but a large share of the awful responsibility must rest upon the person then at the head of the government. He was a man of narrow mind and imperfect education, and his uncompromising bigotry was made hot and mischievous by violent and hasty passions; he exerted his influence indecorously and unjustifiably to compass the death of the enthusiasts; and his whole conduct, in respect to them, was marked by brutal cruelty. The Quakers, whose revengeful feelings were not less deep because they were inactive, remembered this man and his associates in after times. The historian of the sect affirms that, by the wrath of Heaven, a blight fell upon the land in the vicinity of the "bloody town"

of Boston, so that no wheat would grow there; and he takes his stand, as it were, among the graves of the ancient persecutors, and triumphantly recounts the judgments that overtook them, in old age or at the parting hour. He tells us that they died suddenly and violently and in madness; but nothing can exceed the bitter mockery with which he records the loathsome disease, and "death by rottenness," of the fierce and cruel governor.

. . . . . .

On the evening of the autumn day that had witnessed the martyrdom of two men of the Quaker persuasion, a Puritan settler was returning from the metropolis to the neighboring country town in which he resided. The air was cool, the sky clear, and the lingering twilight was made brighter by the rays of a young moon, which had now nearly reached the verge of the horizon. The traveler, a man of middle age, wrapped in a gray frieze cloak, quickened his pace when he reached the outskirts of the town, for a gloomy extent of nearly four miles lay between him and his home. The low, straw-thatched houses were scattered at considerable intervals along the road, and the country having been settled but about thirty years, the tracts of original forest still bore no small proportion to the cultivated ground. The autumn wind wandered among the branches, whirling away the leaves from all except the pine trees, and moaning as if it lamented the desolation of which it was the instrument. The road had

penetrated the mass of woods that lay nearest to the town, and was just emerging into an open space, when the traveler's ears were saluted by a sound more mournful than even that of the wind. It was like the wailing of someone in distress, and it seemed to proceed from beneath a tall and lonely fir tree, in the center of a cleared but uninclosed and uncultivated field. The Puritan could not but remember that this was the very spot which had been made accursed a few hours before by the execution of the Quakers, whose bodies had been thrown together into one hasty grave, beneath the tree on which they suffered. He struggled, however, against the superstitious fears which belong to the age, and compelled himself to pause and listen.

"The voice is most likely mortal, nor have I cause to tremble if it be otherwise," thought he, straining his eyes through the dim moonlight. "Methinks it is like the wailing of a child; some infant, it may be, which has strayed from its mother, and chanced upon this place of death. For the ease of mine own conscience I must search this matter out."

He therefore left the path, and walked somewhat fearfully across the field. Though now so desolate, its soil was pressed down and trampled by the thousand footsteps of those who had witnessed the spectacle of that day, all of whom had now retired, leaving the dead to their loneliness. The traveler at length reached the fir tree, which

from the middle upward was covered with living branches, although a scaffold had been erected beneath, and other preparations made for the work of death. Under this unhappy tree, which in after times was believed to drop poison with its dew, sat the one solitary mourner for innocent blood. It was a slender and light-clad little boy, who leaned his face upon a hillock of fresh-turned and half-frozen earth, and wailed bitterly, yet in a suppressed tone, as if his grief might receive the punishment of crime. The Puritan, whose approach had been unperceived, laid his hand upon the child's shoulder, and addressed him compassionately.

"You have chosen a dreary lodging, my poor boy, and no wonder that you weep," said he. "But dry your eyes, and tell me where your mother dwells. I promise you, if the journey be not too far, I will leave you in her arms to-night."

The boy had hushed his wailing at once, and turned his face upward to the stranger. It was a pale, bright-eyed countenance, certainly not more than six years old, but sorrow, fear, and want had destroyed much of its infantile expression. The Puritan, seeing the boy's frightened gaze, and feeling that he trembled under his hand, endeavored to reassure him.

"Nay, if I intended to do you harm, little lad, the readiest way were to leave you here. What! you do not fear to sit beneath the gallows on a new-made grave, and yet you tremble at a friend's

touch. Take heart, child, and tell me what is your name and where is your home?"

"Friend," replied the little boy, in a sweet though faltering voice, "they call me Ilbrahim, and my home is here."

The pale, spiritual face, the eyes that seemed to mingle with the moonlight, the sweet, airy voice, and the outlandish name, almost made the Puritan believe that the boy was in truth a being which had sprung up out of the grave on which he sat. But perceiving that the apparition stood the test of a short mental prayer, and remembering that the arm which he had touched was lifelike, he adopted a more rational supposition. "The poor child is stricken in his intellect," thought he, "but verily his words are fearful in a place like this." He then spoke soothingly, intending to humor the boy's fantasy.

"Your home will scarce be comfortable, Ilbrahim, this cold autumn night, and I fear you are ill-provided with food. I am hastening to a warm supper and bed, and if you will go with me you shall share them!"

"I thank thee, friend, but though I be hungry, and shivering with cold, thou wilt not give me food nor lodging," replied the boy, in the quiet tone which despair had taught him, even so young. "My father was of the people whom all men hate. They had laid him under this heap of earth, and here is my home."

The Puritan who had laid hold of little Ilbrahim's hand, relinquished it as if he were touching

a loathsome reptile. But he possessed a compassionate heart, which not even religious prejudice could harden into stone.

"God forbid that I should leave this child to perish, though he comes of the accursed sect," said he to himself. "Do we not all spring from an evil root? Are we not all in darkness till the light doth shine upon us? He shall not perish, neither in body, nor, if prayer and instruction may avail for him, in soul." He then spoke aloud and kindly to Ilbrahim, who had again hid his face in the cold earth of the grave. "Was every door in the land shut against you, my child, that you have wandered to this unhallowed spot?"

"They drove me forth from the prison when they took my father thence," said the boy, "and I stood afar off watching the crowd of people, and when they were gone I came hither, and found only his grave. I knew that my father was sleeping here, and I said this shall be my home."

"No, child, no; not while I have a roof over my head, or a morsel to share with you!" exclaimed the Puritan, whose sympathies were now fully excited. "Rise up and come with me, and fear not any harm."

The boy wept afresh, and clung to the heap of earth as if the cold heart beneath it were warmer to him than any in a living breast. The traveler, however, continued to entreat him tenderly, and seeming to acquire some degree of confidence, he at length arose. But his slender limbs tottered with weakness, his little head grew dizzy, and

he leaned against the tree of death for support.

"My poor boy, are you so feeble?" said the Puritan. "When did you taste food last?'

"I ate of bread and water with my father in the prison," replied Ilbrahim, "but they brought him none neither yesterday nor to-day, saying that he had eaten enough to bear him to his journey's end. Trouble not thyself for my hunger, kind friend, for I have lacked food many times ere now."

The traveler took the child in his arms and wrapped his cloak about him, while his heart stirred with shame and anger against the gratuitous cruelty of the instruments in this persecution. In the awakened warmth of his feelings he resolved that, at whatever risk, he would not forsake the poor little defenceless being whom Heaven had confided to his care. With this determination he left the accursed field, and resumed the homeward path from which the wailing of the boy had called him. The light and motionless burden scarcely impeded his progress, and he soon beheld the fire rays from the windows of the cottage which he, a native of a distant clime, had built in the western wilderness. It was surrounded by a considerable extent of cultivated ground, and the dwelling was situated in the nook of a wood-covered hill, whither it seemed to have crept for protection.

"Look up, child," said the Puritan to Ilbrahim, whose faint head had sunk upon his shoulder, "there is our home."

At the word "home," a thrill passed through the child's frame, but he continued silent. A few moments brought them to a cottage door, at which the owner knocked; for at that early period, when savages were wandering everywhere among the settlers, bolt and bar were indispensable to the security of a dwelling. The summons was answered by a bond-servant, a coarse-clad and dull-featured piece of humanity, who, after ascertaining that his master was the applicant, undid the door, and held a flaring pine-knot torch to light him in. Farther back in the passageway, the red blaze discovered a matronly woman, but no little crowd of children came bounding forth to great their father's return. As the Puritan entered, he thrust aside his cloak, and displayed Ilbrahim's face to the female.

"Dorothy, here is a little outcast, whom Providence hath put into our hands," observed he. "Be kind to him, even as if he were of those dear ones who have departed from us."

"What pale and bright-eyed little boy is this, Tobias?" she inquired. "Is he one whom the wilderness folk have ravished from some Christian mother?"

"No, Dorothy, this poor child is no captive from the wilderness," he replied. "The heathen savage would have given him to eat of his scanty morsel, and to drink of his birchen cup; but Christian men, alas! had cast him out to die."

Then he told her how he had found him beneath the gallows, upon his father's grave; and how his

heart had prompted him, like the speaking of an inward voice, to take the little outcast home, and be kind unto him. He acknowledged his resolution to feed and clothe him, as if he were his own child, and to afford him the instruction which should counteract the pernicious errors hitherto instilled into his infant mind. Dorothy was gifted with even a quicker tenderness than her husband, and she approved of all his doings and intentions.

"Have you a mother, dear child?" she inquired.

The tears burst forth from his full heart, as he attempted to reply; but Dorothy at length understood that he had a mother, who, like the rest of her sect, was a persecuted wanderer. She had been taken from the prison a short time before, carried into the uninhabited wilderness, and left to perish there by hunger or wild beasts. This was no uncommon method of disposing of the Quakers, and they were accustomed to boast that the inhabitants of the desert were more hospitable to them than civilized man.

"Fear not, little boy, you shall not need a mother, and a kind one," said Dorothy, when she had gathered this information. "Dry your tears, Ilbrahim, and be my child, as I will be your mother."

The good woman prepared the little bed, from which her own children had successively been borne to another resting-place. Before Ilbrahim would consent to occupy it, he knelt down, and as Dorothy listened to his simple and affecting

prayer, she marveled how the parents that had taught it to him could have been judged worthy of death. When the boy had fallen alseep, she bent over his pale and spiritual countenance, pressed a kiss upon his white brow, drew the bedclothes up about his neck, and went away with a pensive gladness in her heart.

Tobias Pearson was not among the earliest emigrants from the old country. He had remained in England during the first years of the civil war, in which he had borne some share as a cornet of dragoons, under Cromwell. But when the ambitious designs of his leader began to develop themselves, he quitted the army of the Parliament, and sought a refuge from the strife, which was no longer holy, among the people of his persuasion in the colony of Massachusetts. A more worldly consideration had perhaps an influence in drawing him thither; for New England offered advantages to men of unprosperous fortunes, as well as to dissatisfied religionists, and Pearson had hitherto found it difficult to provide for a wife and increasing family. To this supposed impurity of motive the more bigoted Puritans were inclined to impute the removal by death of all the children, for whose earthly good the father had been overthoughtful. They had left their native country blooming like roses, and like roses they had perished in a foreigh soil. Those expounders of the ways of Providence who had thus judged their brother, and attributed his domestic sorrows to his sin, were not more charitable when they saw him and Dorothy en-

deavoring to fill up the void in their hearts by the adoption of an infant of the accursed sect. Nor did they fail to communicate their disapprobation to Tobias; but the latter, in reply, merely pointed at the little, quiet, lovely boy, whose appearance and deportment were indeed as powerful arguments as could possibly have been adduced in his own favor. Even his beauty, however, and his winning manners, sometimes produced an effect ultimately unfavorable; for the bigots, when the outer surfaces of their iron hearts had been softened and again grew hard, affirmed that no merely natural cause could have so worked upon them.

Their antipathy to the poor infant was also increased by the ill success of divers theological discussions, in which it was attempted to convince him of the errors of his sect. Ilbrahim, it is true, was not a skilful controversialist; but the feeling of his religion was strong as instinct in him, and he could neither be enticed nor driven from the faith which his father had died for. The odium of this stubbornness was shared in a great measure by the child's protectors, insomuch that Tobias and Dorothy very shortly began to experience a most bitter species of persecution, in the cold regards of many a friend whom they had valued. The common people manifested their opinions more openly. Pearson was a man of some consideration, being a representative to the General Court, and an approved lieutenant in the trainbands, yet within a week after his adoption of

Ilbrahim he had been both hissed and hooted. Once, also, when walking through a solitary piece of woods, he heard a loud voice from some invisible speaker; and it cried, "What shall be done to the backslider? Lo! the scourge is knotted for him, even the whip of nine cords, and every cord three knots!" These insults irritated Pearson's temper for the moment; they entered also into his heart, and became imperceptible but powerful workers towards an end which his most secret thought had not yet whispered.

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On the second Sabbath after Ilbrahim became a member of their family, Pearson and his wife deemed it proper that he should appear with them at public worship. They had anticipated some opposition to this measure from the boy, but he prepared himself in silence, and at the appointed hour was clad in the new mourning suit which Dorothy had wrought for him. As the parish was then, and during many subsequent years, unprovided with a bell, the signal for the commencement of religious exercises was the beat of a drum. At the first sound of that martial call to the place of holy and quiet thoughts, Tobias and Dorothy set forth, each holding a hand of little Ilbrahim, like two parents linked together by the infant of their love. On their path through the leafless woods they were overtaken by many persons of their acquaintance, all of whom avoided them, and passed by on the other side; but a se-

verer trial awaited their constancy when they had descended the hill, and drew near the pine-built and undecorated house of prayer. Around the door, from which the drummer still sent forth his thundering summons, was drawn up a formidable phalanx, including several of the oldest members of the congregation, many of the middle aged, and nearly all the younger males. Pearson found it difficult to sustain their united and disapproving gaze, but Dorothy, wnose mind was differently circumstanced, merely drew the boy closer to her, and faltered not in her approach. As they entered the door, they overheard the muttered sentiments of the assemblage, and when the reviling voices of the little children smote Ilbrahim's ear, he wept.

The interior aspect of the meeting-house was rude. The low ceiling, the unplastered walls, the naked wood work, and the undraperied pulpit, offered nothing to excite the devotion, which, without such external aids, often remains latent in the heart. The floor of the building was occupied by rows of long, cushionless benches, supplying the place of pews, and the broad aisle formed a sexual division, impassable except by children beneath a certain age.

Pearson and Dorothy separated at the door of the meeting-house, and Ilbrahim, being within the years of infancy, was retained under the care of the latter. The wrinkled beldams involved themselves in their rusty cloaks as he passed by; even the mild-featured maidens seemed to dread contamination; and many a stern old man arose, and

turned his repulsive and unheavenly countenance upon the gentle boy, as if the sanctuary were polluted by his presence. He was a sweet infant of the skies that had strayed away from his home, and all the inhabitants of this miserable world closed up their impure hearts against him, drew their earth-soiled garments from his touch, and said, "We are holier than thou."

Ilbrahim, seated by the side of his adopted mother, and retaining fast hold of her hand, assumed a grave and decorous demeanor, such as might befit a person of matured taste and understanding who should find himself in a temple dedicated to some worship which he did not recognize, but felt himself bound to respect. The exercises had not yet commenced, however, when the boy's attention was arrested by an event, apparently of trifling interest. A woman, having her face muffled in a hood, and a cloak drawn completely about her form, advanced slowly up the broad aisle and took a place upon the foremost bench. Ilbrahim's faint color varied, his nerves fluttered, he was unable to turn his eyes from the muffled female.

When the preliminary prayer and hymn were over, the minister arose, and having turned the hourglass which stood by the great Bible, commenced his discourse. He was now well stricken in years, a man of pale, thin countenance, and his gray hairs were closely covered by a black velvet skullcap. In his younger days he had practically learned the meaning of persecution

from Archbishop Laud, and he was not now disposed to forget the lesson against which he had murmured then. Introducing the often discussed subject of the Quakers, he gave a history of that sect, and a description of their tenets, in which error predominated, and prejudice distorted the aspect of what was true. He adverted to the recent measures in the province, and cautioned his hearers of weaker parts against calling in question the just severity which God-fearing magistrates had at length been compelled to exercise. He spoke of the danger of pity, in some cases a commendable and Christian virtue, but inapplicable to this pernicious sect. He observed that such was their devilish obstinacy in error, that even the little children, the sucking babes, were hardened and desperate heretics. He affirmed that no man, without Heaven's especial warrant, should attempt their conversion, lest while he lent his hand to draw them from the slough, he should himself be precipitated into its lowest depths.

The sands of the second hour were principally in the lower half of the glass when the sermon concluded. An approving murmur followed, and the clergyman, having given out a hymn, took his seat with much self-congratulation, and endeavored to read the effect of his eloquence in the visages of the people. But while voices from all parts of the house were tuning themselves to sing, a scene occurred, which, though not very unusual at that period in the province, happened to be without precedent in this parish.

The muffled female, who had hitherto sat motionless in the front rank of the audience, now arose, and with slow, stately, and unwavering step, ascended the pulpit stairs. The quiverings of incipient harmony were hushed, and the divine sat in speechless and almost terrified astonishment while she undid the door, and stood up in the sacred desk from which his maledictions had just been thundered. She then divested herself of the cloak and hood, and appeared in a most singular array. A shapeless robe of sackcloth was girded about her waist with a knotted cord; her raven hair fell down upon her shoulders, and its blackness was defiled by pale streaks of ashes, which she had strown upon her head. Her eyebrows, dark and strongly defined, added to the deathly whiteness of a countenance, which, emaciated with want, and wild with enthusiasm and strange sorrows, retained no trace of earlier beauty. This figure stood gazing earnestly on the audience, and there was no sound, nor any movement, except a faint shuddering which every man observed in his neighbor, but was scarcely conscious of in himself. At length, when her fit of inspiration came, she spoke, for the first few moments, in a low voice, and not invariably distinct utterance. Her discourse gave evidence of an imagination hopelessly entangled with her reason; it was a vague and incomprehensible rhapsody, which, however, seemed to spread its own atmosphere round the hearer's soul, and to move his feelings by some influence unconnected with the words. As she

proceeded, beautiful but shadowy images would sometimes be seen, like bright things moving in a turbid river; or a strong and singularly shaped idea leaped forth, and seized at once on the understanding or the heart. But the course of her earthly eloquence soon led her to the persecutions of her sect, and from thence the step was short to her own peculiar sorrows. She was naturally a woman of mighty passions, and hatred and revenge now wrapped themselves in the garb of piety; the character of her speech was changed, her images became distinct though wild, and her denunciations had an almost hellish bitterness.

"The Governor and his mighty men," she said, "have gathered together, taking counsel among themselves and saying, 'What shall we do unto this people—even unto the people that have come into this land to put our iniquity to the blush?' And lo! the devil entereth into the council chamber, like a lame man of low stature and gravely apparelled, with a dark and twisted countenance and a bright, downcast eye. And he standeth up among the rulers; yea, he goeth to and fro, whispering to each; and every man lends his ear, for his word is 'Slay, slay!' But I say unto ye, Woe to them that slay! Woe to them that shed the blood of saints! Woe to them that have slain the husband, and cast forth the child, the tender infant, to wander homeless and hungry and cold, till he die; and have saved the mother alive, in the cruelty of their tender mercies! Woe to them in their lifetime! cursed are they in the delight and

pleasure of their hearts! Woe to them in their death hour, whether it come swiftly with blood and violence, or after long and lingering pain! Woe, in the dark house, in the rottenness of the grave, when the children's children shall revile the ashes of the fathers! Woe, woe, woe, at the judgment, when all the persecuted and all the slain in this bloody land, and the father, the mother, and the child, shall await them in a day that they cannot escape! Seed of the faith, seed of the faith, ye whose hearts are moving with a power that ye know not, arise, wash your hands of this innocent blood! Lift your voices, chosen ones cry aloud, and call down a woe and a judgment with me!"

Having thus given vent to the flood of malignity which she mistook for inspiration, the speaker was silent. Her voice was succeeded by the hysteric shrieks of several women, but the feelings of the audience generally had not been drawn onward in the current with her own. They remained stupefied, stranded as it were, in the midst of a torrent, which deafened them by its roaring, but might not move them by its violence. The clergyman, who could not hitherto have ejected the usurper of his pulpit otherwise than by bodily force, now addressed her in the tone of just indignation and legitimate authority.

"Get you down, woman, from the holy place which you profane," he said. "Is it to the Lord's house that you come to pour forth the foulness of your heart and the inspiration of the devil? Get

you down, and remember that the sentence of death is on you; yea, and shall be executed, were it but for this day's work!"

"I go, friend, I go, for the voice hath had its utterance," replied she, in a depressed and even mild tone. "I have done my mission unto thee and to thy people. Reward me with stripes, imprisonment, or death, as ye shall be permitted."

The weakness of exhausted passion caused her steps to totter as she descended the pulpit stairs. The people, in the meanwhile, were stirring to and fro on the floor of the house, whispering among themselves, and glancing towards the intruder. Many of them now recognized her as the woman who had assaulted the Governor with frightful language as he passed by the window of her prison; they knew, also, that she was adjudged to suffer death, and had been preserved only by an involuntary banishment into the wilderness. The new outrage, by which she had provoked her fate, seemed to render further lenity impossible; and a gentleman in military dress, with a stout man of inferior rank, drew towards the door of the meeting-house, and awaited her approach.

Scarcely did her feet press the floor, however, when an unexpected scene occurred. In that moment of her peril, when every eye frowned with death, a little timid boy pressed forth, and threw his arms round his mother.

"I am here, Mother; it is I, and I will go with thee to prison," he exclaimed.

She gazed at him with a doubtful and almost

frightened expression, for she knew that the boy had been cast out to perish, and she had not hoped to see his face again. She feared, perhaps, that it was but one of the happy visions with which her excited fancy had often deceived her, in the solitude of the desert or in prison. But when she felt his hand warm within her own, and heard his little eloquence of childish love, she began to know that she was yet a mother.

"Blessed art thou, my son," she sobbed. "My heart was withered; yea, dead with thee and with thy father; and now it leaps as in the first moment when I pressed thee to my bosom."

She knelt down and embraced him again and again, while the joy that could find no words expressed itself in broken accents, like the bubbles gushing up to vanish at the surface of a deep fountain. The sorrows of past years, and the darker peril that was nigh, cast not a shadow on the brightness of that fleeting moment. Soon, however, the spectators saw a change upon her face, as the consciousness of her sad estate returned, and grief supplied the fount of tears which joy had opened. By the words she uttered it would seem that the indulgence of natural love had given her mind a momentary sense of its errors, and made her know how far she had strayed from duty in following the dictates of a wild fanaticism.

"In a doleful hour art thou returned to me, poor boy," she said, "for thy mother's path has gone darkening onward, till now the end is death. Son, son, I have borne thee in my arms when my

limbs were tottering, and I have fed thee with the food that I was fainting for; yet I have ill performed a mother's part by thee in life, and now I leave thee no inheritance but woe and shame. Thou wilt go seeking through the world, and find all hearts closed against thee and their sweet affections turned to bitterness for my sake. My child, my child, how many a pang awaits thy gentle spirit, and I the cause of all!"

She hid her face on Ilbrahim's head, and her long raven hair, discolored with the ashes of her mourning, fell down about him like a veil. A low and interrupted moan was the voice of her heart's anguish and it did not fail to move the sympathies of many who mistook their involuntary virtue for a sin. Sobs were audible in the female section of the house, and every man who was a father drew his hand across his eyes. Tobias Pearson was agitated and uneasy, but a certain feeling like the consciousess of guilt oppressed him, so that he could not go forth and offer himself as the protector of the child. Dorothy, however, had watched her husband's eye. Her mind was free from the influence that had begun to work on his, and she drew near the Quaker woman, and addressed her in the hearing of all the congregation.

"Stranger, trust this boy to me, and I will be his mother," she said, taking Ilbrahim's hand. "Providence has signally marked out my husband to protect him, and he has fed at our table and lodged under our roof now many days, till our hearts have grown very strongly unto him. Leave

the tender child with us, and be at ease concerning his welfare."

The Quaker rose from the ground, but drew the boy close to her, while she gazed earnestly in Dorothy's face. Her mild but saddened features, and neat matronly attire, harmonized together, and were like a verse of fireside poetry. Her very aspect proved that she was blameless, so far as mortal could be so, in respect to God and man; while the enthusiast, in her robe of sackcloth and girdle of knotted cord, had as evidently violated the duties of the present life and the future, by fixing her attention wholly on the latter. The two females as they held each a hand of Ilbrahim formed a practical allegory; it was rational piety and unbridled fanaticism contending for the empire of a young heart.

"Thou art not of our people," said the Quaker, mournfully.

"No, we are not of your people," replied Dorothy, with mildness, "but we are Christians, looking upward to the same heaven with you. Doubt not that your boy shall meet you there, if there be a blessing on our tender and prayerful guidance of him. Thither, I trust, my own children have gone before me, for I also have been a mother; I am no longer so," she added, in a faltering tone, "and your son will have all my care."

"But will ye lead him in the path which his parents have trodden?" demanded the Quaker. "Can ye teach him the enlightened faith which his father has died for, and for which I, even I, am

soon to become an unworthy martyr? The boy has been baptized in blood; will ye keep the mark fresh and ruddy upon his forehead?"

"I will not deceive you," answered Dorothy. "If your child become our child, we must breed him up in the instruction which Heaven has imparted to us; we must pray for him the prayers of our own faith; we must do towards him according to the dictates of our own consciences, and not of yours. Were we to act otherwise, we should abuse your trust, even in complying with your wishes."

The mother looked down upon her boy with a troubled countenance, and then turned her eyes upward to heaven. She seemed to pray internally, and the contention of her soul was evident.

"Friend," she said at length to Dorothy, "I doubt not that my son shall receive all earthly tenderness at thy hands. Nay, I will believe that even thy imperfect lights may guide him to a better world, for surely thou art on the path thither. But thou hast spoken of a husband. Doth he stand here among this multitude of people? Let him come forth, for I must know to whom I commit this most precious trust."

She turned her face upon the male auditors, and after a momentary delay, Tobias Pearson came forth from among them. The Quaker saw the dress which marked his military rank, and shook her head; but then she noted the hesitating air, the eyes that struggled with her own, and were vanquished; the color that went and came, and

could find no resting-place. As she gazed, an unmirthful smile spread over her features, like sunshine that grows melancholy in some desolate spot. Her lips moved inaudibly, but at length she spake.

"I hear it, I hear it. The voice speaketh within me and saith, 'Leave thy child, Catharine, for his place is here, and go hence, for I have other work for thee. Break the bonds of natural affection, martyr thy love, and know that in all these things eternal wisdom hath its ends.' I go, friends; I go. Take ye my boy, my precious jewel. I go hence, trusting that all shall be well, and that even for his infant hands there is a labor in that vineyard."

She knelt down and whispered to Ilbrahim, who at first struggled and clung to his mother, with sobs and tears, but remained passive when she had kissed his cheek and arisen from the ground. Having held her hands over his head in mental prayer, she was ready to depart.

"Farewell, friends in mine extremity," she said to Pearson and his wife; "the good deed ye have done me is a treasure laid up in heaven, to be returned a thousand-fold hereafter. And farewell ye, mine enemies, to whom it is not permitted to harm so much as a hair of my head, nor to stay my footsteps even for a moment. The day is coming when ye shall call upon me to witness for ye to this one sin uncommitted, and I will rise up and answer."

She turned her steps towards the door, and the men, who had stationed themselves to guard it,

withdrew, and suffered her to pass. A general sentiment of pity overcame the virulence of religious hatred. Sanctified by her love and her affliction, she went forth, and all the people gazed after her till she had journeyed up the hill, and was lost behind its brow. She went, the apostle of her own unquiet heart, to renew the wanderings of past years. For her voice had been already heard in many lands of Christendom; and she had pined in the cells of a Catholic Inquisition before she felt the lash and lay in the dungeons of the Puritans. Her mission had extended also to the followers of the Prophet, and from them she had received the courtesy and kindness which all the contending sects of our purer religion united to deny her. Her husband and herself had resided many months in Turkey, where even the Sultan's countenance was gracious to them; in that pagan land, too, was Ilbrahim's birthplace, and his oriental name was a mark of gratitude for the good deeds of an unbeliever.

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When Pearson and his wife had thus acquired all the rights over Ilbrahim that could be delegated, their affection for him became like the memory of their native land, or their mild sorrow for the dead, a piece of the immovable furniture of their hearts. The boy, also, after a week or two of mental disquiet, began to gratify his protectors by many inadvertent proofs that he considered them as parents, and their house as home. Before

the winter snows were melted, the persecuted infant, the little wanderer from a remote and heathen country, seemed native in the New England cottage, and inseparable from the warmth and security of its hearth. Under the influence of kind treatment, and in the consciousness that he was loved, Ilbrahim's demeanor lost a premature manliness, which had resulted from his earlier situation; he became more childlike, and his natural character displayed itself with freedom. It was in many respects a beautiful one, yet the disordered imaginations of both his father and mother had perhaps propagated a certain unhealthiness in the mind of the boy. In his general state, Ilbrahim would derive enjoyment from the most trifling events, and from every object about him; he seemed to discover rich treasures of happiness, by a faculty analogous to that of the witch hazel, which points to hidden gold where all is barren to the eye. His airy gayety, coming to him from a thousand sources, communicated itself to the family, and Ilbrahim was like a domesticated sunbeam, brightening moody countenances and chasing away the gloom from the dark corners of the cottage.

On the other hand, as the susceptibility of pleasure is also that of pain, the exuberant cheerfulness of the boy's prevailing temper sometimes yielded to moments of deep depression. His sorrows could not always be followed up to their original source, but most frequently they appeared to flow, though Ilbrahim was young to be sad for

such a cause, from wounded love. The flightiness of his mirth rendered him often guilty of offences against the decorum of a Puritan household, and on these occasions he did not invariably escape rebuke. But the slightest word of real bitterness, which he was infallible in distinguishing from pretended anger, seemed to sink into his heart and poison all his enjoyments, till he became sensible that he was entirely forgiven. Of the malice, which generally accompanies a superfluity of sensitiveness, Ilbrahim was altogether destitute: when trodden upon, he would not turn; when wounded, he could but die. His mind was wanting in the stamina for self-support; it was a plant that would twine beautifully round something stronger than itself, but if repulsed, or torn away, it had no choice but to wither on the ground. Dorothy's acuteness taught her that severity would crush the spirit of the child, and she nurtured him with the gentle care of one who handles a butterfly. Her husband manifested an equal affection, although it grew daily less productive of familiar caresses.

The feelings of the neighboring people, in regard to the Quaker infant and his protectors, had not undergone a favorable change, in spite of the momentary triumph which the desolate mother had obtained over their sympathies. The scorn and bitterness, of which he was the object, were very grievous to Ilbrahim, especially when any circumstance made him sensible that the children, his equals in age, partook of the enmity of their

parents. His tender and social nature had already overflowed in attachments to everything about him, and still there was a residue of unappropriated love, which he yearned to bestow upon the little ones who were taught to hate him. As the warm days of spring came on, Ilbrahim was accustomed to remain for hours, silent and inactive, within hearing of the children's voices at their play; yet, with his usual delicacy of feeling, he avoided their notice, and would flee and hide himself from the smallest individual among them. Chance, however, at length seemed to open a medium of communication between his heart and theirs; it was by means of a boy about two years older than Ilbrahim, who was injured by a fall from a tree in the vicinity of Pearson's habitation. As the sufferer's own home was at some distance, Dorothy willingly received him under her roof, and became his tender and careful nurse.

Ilbrahim was the unconscious possessor of much skill in physiognomy, and it would have deterred him, in other circumstances, from attempting to make a friend of this boy. The countenance of the latter immediately impressed a beholder disagreeably, but it required some examination to discover that the cause was a very slight distortion of the mouth, and the irregular, broken line, and near approach of the eyebrows. Analogous, perhaps, to these trifling deformities, was an almost imperceptible twist of every joint, and the uneven prominence of the breast; forming a body, regular in its general outline, but faulty in almost all its

details. The disposition of the boy was sullen and reserved, and the village schoolmaster stigmatized him as obtuse in intellect; although, at a later period of life, he evinced ambition and very peculiar talents. But whatever might be his personal or moral irregularities Ilbrahim's heart seized upon, and clung to him, from the moment that he was brought wounded into the cottage; the child of persecution seemed to compare his own fate with that of the sufferer, and to feel that even different modes of misfortune had created a sort of relationship between them. Food, rest, and the fresh air, for which he languished, were neglected; he nestled continually by the bedside of the little stranger, and, with a fond jealousy, endeavored to be the medium of all the cares that were bestowed upon him. As the boy became convalescent, Ilbrahim contrived games suitable to his situation, or amused him by a faculty which he had perhaps breathed in with the air of his barbaric birthplace. It was that of reciting imaginary adventures, on the spur of the moment, and apparently in inexhaustible succession. His tales were of course monstrous, disjointed, and without aim; but they were curious on account of a vein of human tenderness which ran through them all, and was like a sweet, familiar face, encountered in the midst of wild and unearthly scenery. The auditor paid much attention to these romances, and sometimes interrupted them by brief remarks upon the incidents, displaying shrewdness above his years, mingled with a moral obliquity which

grated very harshly against Ilbrahim's instinctive rectitude. Nothing, however, could arrest the progress of the latter's affection, and there were many proofs that it met with a response from the dark and stubborn nature on which it was lavished. The boy's parents at length removed him, to complete his cure under their own roof.

Ilbrahim did not visit his new friend after his departure; but he made anxious and continual inquiries respecting him, and informed himself of the day when he was to reappear among his playmates. On a pleasant summer afternoon, the children of the neighborhood had assembled in the little forest-crowned amphitheater behind the meeting-house, and the recovering invalid was there, leaning on a staff. The glee of a score of untainted bosoms was heard in light and airy voices, which danced among the trees like sunshine become audible; the grown men of this weary world, as they journeyed by the spot, marveled why life, beginning in such brightness, should proceed in gloom; and their hearts, or their imaginations, answered them and said, that the bliss of childhood gushes from its innocence. But it happened that an unexpected addition was made to the heavenly little band. It was Ilbrahim, who came towards the children with a look of sweet confidence on his fair and spiritual face, as if, having manifested his love to one of them, he had no longer to fear a repulse from their society. A hush came over their mirth the moment they beheld him, and they stood whispering to each other

while he drew nigh; but, all at once, the devil of their fathers entered into the unbreeched fanatics, and sending up a fierce, shrill cry, they rushed upon the poor Quaker child. In an instant, he was the center of a brood of baby-fiends, who lifted sticks against him, pelted him with stones, and displayed an instinct of destruction far more loathsome than the bloodthirstiness of manhood.

The invalid, in the meanwhile, stood apart from the tumult, crying out with a loud voice, "Fear not, Ilbrahim, come hither and take my hand"; and his unhappy friend endeavored to obey him. After watching the victim's struggling approach with a calm smile and unabashed eye, the foul-hearted little villain lifted his staff and struck Ilbrahim on the mouth, so forcibly that the blood issued in a stream. The poor child's arms had been raised to guard his head from the storm of blows; but now he dropped them at once. His persecutors beat him down, trampled upon him, dragged him by his long, fair locks, and Ilbrahim was on the point of becoming as veritable a martyr as ever entered bleeding into heaven. The uproar, however, attracted the notice of a few neighbors, who put themselves to the trouble of rescuing the little heretic, and of conveying him to Pearson's door.

Ilbrahim's bodily harm was severe, but long and careful nursing accomplished his recovery; the injury done to his sensitive spirit was more serious, though not so visible. Its signs were principally

of a negative character, and to be discovered only by those who had previously known him. His gait was thenceforth slow, even, and unvaried by the sudden bursts of sprightlier motion, which had once corresponded to his overflowing gladness; his countenance was heavier, and its former play of expression, the dance of sunshine reflected from moving water, was destroyed by the cloud over his existence; his notice was attracted in a far less degree by passing events, and he appeared to find greater difficulty in comprehending what was new to him than at a happier period. A stranger, founding his judgment upon these circumstances, would have said that the dulness of the child's intellect widely contradicted the promise of his features; but the secret was in the direction of Ilbrahim's thoughts, which were brooding within him when they should naturally have been wandering abroad. An attempt of Dorothy to revive his former sportiveness was the single occasion on which his quiet demeanor yielded to a violent display of grief; he burst into passionate weeping, and ran and hid himself, for his heart had become so miserably sore that even the hand of kindness tortured it like fire. Sometimes, at night and probably in his dreams, he was heard to cry "Mother! Mother!" as if her place, which a stranger had supplied while Ilbrahim was happy, admitted of no substitute in his extreme affliction. Perhaps, among the many life-weary wretches then upon the earth, there was not one who com-

bined innocence and misery like this poor, broken-hearted infant, so soon the victim of his own heavenly nature.

While this melancholy change had taken place in Ilbrahim, one of an earlier origin and of different character had come to its perfection in his adopted father. The incident with which this tale commences found Pearson in a state of religious dulness, yet mentally disquieted, and longing for a more fervid faith than he possessed. The first effect of his kindness to Ilbrahim was to produce a softened feeling, and incipient love for the child's whole sect; but joined to this, and resulting perhaps from self-suspicion, was a proud and ostentatious contempt of all their tenets and practical extravagances. In the course of much thought, however, for the subject struggled irresistibly into his mind, the foolishness of the doctrine began to be less evident, and the points which had particularly offended his reason assumed another aspect, or vanished entirely away. The work within him appeared to go on even while he slept, and that which had been a doubt, when he lay down to rest, would often hold the place of a truth, confirmed by some forgotten demonstration, when he recalled his thoughts in the morning.

But while he was thus becoming assimilated to the enthusiasts, his contempt, in nowise decreasing towards them, grew very fierce against himself; he imagined, also, that every face of his acquaintance wore a sneer, and that every word addressed to him was a gibe. Such was his state of mind at

the period of Ilbrahim's misfortune; and the emotions consequent upon that event completed the change, of which the child had been the original instrument.

In the meantime, neither the fierceness of the persecutors, nor the infatuation of their victims, had decreased. The dungeons were never empty; the streets of almost every village echoed daily with the lash; the life of a woman, whose mild and Christian spirit no cruelty could embitter, had been sacrificed; and more innocent blood was yet to pollute the hands that were so often raised in prayer. Early after the Restoration, the English Quakers represented to Charles II that a "vein of blood was open in his dominions"; but though the displeasure of the voluptuous king was roused, his interference was not prompt. And now the tale must stride forward over many months, leaving Pearson to encounter ignominy and misfortune; his wife to a firm endurance of a thousand sorrows; poor Ilbrahim to pine and droop like a cankered rosebud; his mother to wander on a mistaken errand, neglectful of the holiest trust which can be committed to a woman.

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A winter evening, a night of storm, had darkened over Pearson's habitation, and there were no cheerful faces to drive the gloom from his broad hearth. The fire, it is true, sent forth a glowing heat and a ruddy light, and large logs, dripping with half-melted snow, lay ready to be cast upon

the embers. But the apartment was saddened in its aspect by the absence of much of the homely wealth which had once adorned it; for the exaction of repeated fines, and his own neglect of temporal affairs, had greatly impoverished the owner. And with the furniture of peace, the implements of war had likewise disappeared; the sword was broken, the helm and cuirass were cast away forever; the soldier had done with battles, and might not lift so much as his naked hand to guard his head. But the Holy Book remained, and the table on which it rested was drawn before the fire, while two of the persecuted sect sought comfort from its pages.

He who listened, while the other read, was the master of the house, now emaciated in form, and altered as to the expression and healthiness of his countenance; for his mind had dwelt too long among visionary thoughts, and his body had been worn by imprisonment and stripes. The hale and weatherbeaten old man who sat beside him had sustained less injury from a far longer course of the same mode of life. In person he was tall and dignified, and, which alone would have made him hateful to the Puritans, his gray locks fell from beneath his broad-brimmed hat, and rested on his shoulders. As the old man read the sacred page the snow drifted against the windows, or eddied in at the crevices of the door, while a blast kept laughing in the chimney, and the blaze leaped fiercely up to seek it. And sometimes, when the wind struck the hill at a certain angle, and swept

down by the cottage across the wintry plain, its voice was the most doleful that can be conceived; it came as if the Past were speaking, as if the Dead had contributed each a whisper, as if the Desolation of Ages were breathed in that one lamenting sound.

The Quaker at length closed the book, retaining, however, his hand between the pages which he had been reading, while he looked steadfastly at Pearson. The attitude and features of the latter might have indicated the endurance of bodily pain; he leaned his forehead on his hands, his teeth were firmly closed, and his frame was tremulous at intervals with a nervous agitation.

"Friend Tobias," inquired the old man, compassionately, "hast thou found no comfort in these many blessed passages of Scripture?"

"Thy voice has fallen on my ear like a sound afar off and indistinct," replied Pearson without lifting his eyes. "Yea, and when I have hearkened carefully the words seemed cold and lifeless, and intended for another and lesser grief than mine. Remove the book," he added, in a tone of sullen bitterness. "I have no part in its consolations, and they do but fret my sorrow the more."

"Nay, feeble brother, be not as one who hath never known the light," said the elder Quaker earnestly, but with mildness. "Art thou he that wouldst be content to give all, and endure all, for conscience' sake; desiring even peculiar trials, that thy faith might be purified and thy heart weaned

from worldly desires? And wilt thou sink beneath an affliction which happens alike to them that have their portion here below, and to them that lay up treasure in heaven? Faint not, for thy burden is yet light."

"It is heavy! It is heavier than I can bear!" exclaimed Pearson, with the impatience of a variable spirit. "From my youth upward I have been a man marked out for wrath; and year by year, yea, day after day, I have endured sorrows such as others know not in their lifetime. And now I speak not of the love that has been turned to hatred, the honor to ignominy, the ease and plentifulness of all things to danger, want, and nakedness. All this I could have borne, and counted myself blessed. But when my heart was desolate with many losses I fixed it upon the child of a stranger, and he became dearer to me than all my buried ones; and now he, too, must die as if my love were poison. Verily, I am an accursed man, and I will lay me down in the dust and lift up my head no more."

"Thou sinnest, brother, but it is not for me to rebuke thee; for I also have had my hours of darkness, wherein I have murmured against the cross," said the old Quaker. He continued, perhaps in the hope of distracting his companion's thoughts from his own sorrows. "Even of late was the light obscured within me, when the men of blood had banished me on pain of death, and the constables led me onward from village to village towards the wilderness. A strong and cruel hand was

wielding the knotted cords; they sunk deep into the flesh, and thou mightst have tracked every reel and totter of my footsteps by the blood that followed. As we went on——"

"Have I not borne all this; and have I murmured?" interrupted Pearson impatiently.

"Nay, friend, but hear me," continued the other. "As we journeyed on, night darkened on our path, so that no man could see the rage of the persecutors or the constancy of my endurance, though Heaven forbid that I should glory therein. The lights began to glimmer in the cottage windows, and I could discern the inmates as they gathered in comfort and security, every man with his wife and children by their own evening hearth. At length we came to a tract of fertile land; in the dim light, the forest was not visible around it; and behold! there was a straw-thatched dwelling, which bore the very aspect of my home, far over the wild ocean, far in our own England. Then came bitter thoughts upon me; yea, remembrances that were like death to my soul. The happiness of my early days was painted to me; the disquiet of my manhood, the altered faith of my declining years. I remembered how I had been moved to go forth a wanderer when my daughter, the youngest, the dearest of my flock, lay on her dying bed, and——"

"Couldst thou obey the command at such a moment?" exclaimed Pearson, shuddering.

"Yea, yea," replied the old man hurriedly. "I was kneeling by her bedside when the voice spoke

loud within me; but immediately I rose, and took my staff, and gat me gone. Oh! that it were permitted me to forget her woful look when I thus withdrew my arm, and left her journeying through the dark valley alone! for her soul was faint, and she had leaned upon my prayers. Now in that night of horror I was assailed by the thought that I had been an erring Christian and a cruel parent; yea, even my daughter, with her pale, dying features, seemed to stand by me and whisper, 'Father, you are deceived; go home and shelter your gray head.' O Thou, to whom I have looked in my farthest wanderings," continued the Quaker, raising his agitated eyes to heaven, "inflict not upon the bloodiest of our persecutors the unmitigated agony of my soul, when I believed that all I had done and suffered for Thee was at the instigation of a mocking fiend! But I yielded not; I knelt down and wrestled with the tempter, while the scourge bit more fiercely into the flesh. My prayer was heard, and I went on in peace and joy towards the wilderness."

The old man, though his fanaticism had generally all the calmness of reason, was deeply moved while reciting this tale; and his unwonted emotion seemed to rebuke and keep down that of his companion. They sat in silence, with their faces to the fire, imagining, perhaps, in its red embers new scenes of persecution yet to be encountered. The snow still drifted hard against the windows, and sometimes, as the blaze of the logs had gradually sunk, came down the spacious chimney and hissed

upon the hearth. A cautious footstep might now and then be heard in a neighboring apartment, and the sound invariably drew the eyes of both Quakers to the door which led thither. When a fierce and riotous gust of wind had led his thoughts, by a natural association, to homeless travelers on such a night, Pearson resumed the conversation.

"I have well-nigh sunk under my own share of this trial," observed he, sighing heavily; "yet I would that it might be doubled to me, if so the child's mother could be spared. Her wounds have been deep and many, but this will be the sorest of all."

"Fear not for Catharine," replied the old Quaker, "for I know that valiant woman, and have seen how she can bear the cross. A mother's heart, indeed, is strong in her, and may seem to contend mightily with her faith; but soon she will stand up and give thanks that her son has been thus early an accepted sacrifice. The boy hath done his work, and she will feel that he is taken hence in kindness both to him and her. Blessed, blessed are they that with so little suffering can enter into peace!"

The fitful rush of the wind was now disturbed by a portentous sound; it was a quick and heavy knocking at the outer door. Pearson's wan countenance grew paler, for many a visit of persecution had taught him what to dread; the old man, on the other hand, stood up erect, and his glance was firm as that of the tried soldier who awaits his enemy.

"The men of blood have come to seek me," he observed with calmness. "They have heard how I was moved to return from banishment; and now am I to be led to prison, and thence to death. It is an end I have long looked for. I will open unto them, lest they say, 'Lo, he feareth!'"

"Nay, I will present myself before them," said Pearson, with recovered fortitude. "It may be that they seek me alone, and know not that thou abidest with me."

"Let us go boldly, both one and the other," rejoined his companion. "It is not fitting that thou or I should shrink."

They therefore proceeded through the entry to the door, which they opened, bidding the applicant "Come in, in God's name!" A furious blast of wind drove the storm into their faces and extinguished the lamp; they had barely time to discern a figure, so white from head to foot with the drifted snow that it seemed like Winter's self, come in human shape, to seek refuge from its own desolation.

"Enter, friend, and do thy errand, be it what it may," said Pearson. "It must needs be pressing, since thou comest on such a bitter night."

"Peace be with this household," said the stranger, when they stood on the floor of the inner apartment.

Pearson started, the elder Quaker stirred the slumbering embers of the fire till they sent up a clear and lofty blaze; it was a female voice that

had spoken; it was a female form that shone out, cold and wintry, in that comfortable light.

"Catharine, blessed woman!" exclaimed the old man, "art thou come to this darkened land again? art thou come to bear a valiant testimony as in former years? The scourge hath not prevailed against thee, and from the dungeon hast thou come forth triumphant; but strengthen, strengthen now thy heart, Catharine, for Heaven will prove thee yet this once, ere thou go to thy reward."

"Rejoice, friends!" she replied. "Thou who hast long been of our people, and thou whom a little child hath led to us, rejoice! Lo! I come, the messenger of glad tidings, for the day of persecution is overpast. The heart of the king, even Charles, hath been moved in gentleness towards us, and he hath sent forth his letters to stay the hands of the men of blood. A ship's company of our friends hath arrived at yonder town, and I also sailed joyfully among them."

As Catharine spoke her eyes were roaming about the room, in search of him for whose sake security was dear to her. Pearson made a silent appeal to the old man, nor did the latter shrink from the painful task assigned him.

"Sister," he began in a softened yet perfectly calm tone, "thou tellest us of His love, manifested in temporal good; and now must we speak to thee of that selfsame love, displayed in chastenings. Hitherto, Catharine, thou hast been as one journeying in a darksome and difficult path, and lead-

ing an infant by the hand; fain wouldst thou have looked heavenward continually, but still the cares of that little child have drawn thine eyes and thy affections to the earth. Sister! go on rejoicing, for his tottering footsteps shall impede thine own no more."

But the unhappy mother was not thus to be consoled; she shook like a leaf, she turned white as the very snow that hung drifted into her hair. The firm old man extended his hand and held her up, keeping his eye upon hers, as if to repress any outbreak of passion.

"I am a woman, I am but a woman; will He try me above my strength?" said Catharine very quickly, and almost in a whisper. "I have been wounded sore; I have suffered much; many things in the body; many in the mind; crucified in myself, and in them that were dearest to me. Surely," added she, with a long shudder, "He hath spared me in this one thing." She broke forth with sudden and irrepressible violence. "Tell me, man of cold heart, what has God done to me? Hath He cast me down, never to rise again? Hath He crushed my very heart in his hand? And thou, to whom I committed my child, how hast thou fulfilled thy trust? Give me back the boy, well, sound, alive, alive; or earth and Heaven shall avenge me!"

The agonized shriek of Catharine was answered by the faint, the very faint, voice of a child.

On this day it had become evident to Pearson, to his aged guest, and to Dorothy, that Ilbrahim's

brief and troubled pilgrimage drew near its close. The two former would willingly have remained by him, to make use of the prayers and pious discourse which they deemed appropriate to the time, and which, if they be impotent as to the departing traveler's reception in the world whither he goes, may at least sustain him in bidding adieu to earth. But though Ilbrahim uttered no complaint, he was disturbed by the faces that looked upon him; so that Dorothy's entreaties, and their own conviction that the child's feet might tread heaven's pavement and not soil it, had induced the two Quakers to remove. Ilbrahim then closed his eyes and grew calm, and, except for now and then a kind and low word to his nurse, might have been thought to slumber. As nightfall came on, however, and the storm began to rise, something seemed to trouble the repose of the boy's mind, and to render his sense of hearing active and acute. If a passing wind lingered to shake the casement, he strove to turn his head towards it; if the door jarred to and fro upon its hinges, he looked long and anxiously thitherward; if the heavy voice of the old man, as he read the Scriptures, rose but a little higher, the child almost held his dying breath to listen; if a snow-drift swept by the cottage, with a sound like the trailing of a garment, Ilbrahim seemed to watch that some visitant should enter.

But, after a little time, he relinquished whatever secret hope had agitated him, and with one low, complaining whisper, turned his cheek upon the

pillow. He then addressed Dorothy with his usual sweetness, and besought her to draw near him; she did so, and Ilbrahim took her hand in both of his, grasping it with a gentle pressure, as if to assure himself that he retained it. At intervals, and without disturbing the repose of his countenance, a very faint trembling passed over him from head to foot, as if a mild but somewhat cool wind had breathed upon him, and made him shiver. As the boy thus led her by the hand, in his quiet progress over the borders of eternity, Dorothy almost imagined that she could discern the near, though dim, delightfulness of the home he was about to reach; she would not have enticed the little wanderer back, though she bemoaned herself that she must leave him and return. But just when Ilbrahim's feet were pressing on the soil of Paradise he heard a voice behind him, and it recalled him a few, few paces of the weary path which he had traveled. As Dorothy looked upon his features, she perceived that their placid expression was again disturbed; her own thoughts had been so wrapped in him, that all sounds of the storm, and of human speech, were lost to her; but when Catharine's shriek pierced through the room, the boy strove to raise himself.

"Friend, she is come! Open unto her!" cried he.

In a moment his mother was kneeling by the bedside; she drew Ilbrahim to her bosom, and he nestled there, with no violence of joy, but contentedly, as if he was hushing himself to sleep. He looked into her face, and reading its agony,

said, with feeble earnestness, "Mourn not, dearest Mother. I am happy now." And with these words the gentle boy was dead.

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The king's mandate to stay the New England persecutors was effectual in preventing further martyrdoms: but the colonial authorities, trusting in the remoteness of their situation, and perhaps in the supposed instability of the royal government, shortly renewed their severities in all other respects. Catharine's fanaticism had become wilder by the sundering of all human ties; and wherever a scourge was lifted there was she to receive the blow; and whenever a dungeon was unbarred thither she came, to cast herself upon the floor. But in process of time a more Christian spirit—a spirit of forebearance, though not of cordiality or approbation—began to pervade the land in regard to the persecuted sect. And then, when the rigid old Pilgrims eyed her rather in pity than in wrath; when the matrons fed her with the fragments of their children's food, and offered her a lodging on a hard and lowly bed; when no little crowd of schoolboys left their sports to cast stones after the roving enthusiast; then did Catharine return to Pearson's dwelling and made that her home.

As if Ilbrahim's sweetness yet lingered round his ashes; as if his gentle spirit came down from heaven to teach his parent a true religion, her fierce and vindictive nature was softened by the same griefs

which had once irritated it. When the course of years had made the features of the unobtrusive mourner familiar in the settlement, she became a subject of not deep, but general, interest; a being on whom the otherwise superfluous sympathies of all might be bestowed. Everyone spoke of her with that degree of pity which it is pleasant to experience; everyone was ready to do her the little kindnesses, which are not costly, yet manifest good will; and when at last she died, a long train of her once bitter persecutors followed her, with decent sadness and tears that were not painful, to her place by Ilbrahim's green and sunken grave.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Lovesight

WHEN do I see thee most, beloved one?
When in the light the spirits of mine eyes
Before thy face, their altar, solemnize
The worship of that Love through thee made known?
Or when in the dusk hours, (we two alone,)
Close-kissed and eloquent of still replies
Thy twilight-hidden glimmering visage lies,
And my soul only see thy soul its own?

O love, my love! if I no more should see
Thyself, nor on the earth the shadow of thee,
Nor image of thine eyes in any spring,—
How then should sound upon Life's darkening slope
The ground-whirl of the perished leaves of Hope,
The wind of Death's imperishable wing?

Heart's Hope

By what word's power, the key of paths untrod,
Shall I the difficult deeps of Love explore,
Till parted waves of Song yield up the shore
Even as that sea which Israel crossed dryshod?

For lo! in some poor rhythmic period,
  Lady, I fain would tell how evermore
  Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor
Thee from myself, neither our love from God.

Yea, in God's name, and Love's, and thine, would I
  Draw from one loving heart such evidence
As to all hearts all things shall signify;
  Tender as dawn's first hill-fire, and intense
  As instantaneous penetrating sense,
In Spring's birth-hour, of other Springs gone by.

The Lovers' Walk

Sweet twining hedgeflowers wind-stirred in no wise
  On this June day; and hand that clings in hand:—
  Still glades; and meeting faces scarcely fann'd:—
An osier-odored stream that draws the skies
Deep to its heart; and mirrored eyes in eyes:—
  Fresh hourly wonder o'er the Summer land
  Of light and cloud; and two souls softly spann'd
With one o'erarching heaven of smiles and sighs:—
Even such their path, whose bodies lean unto
  Each other's visible sweetness amorously,—
  Whose passionate hearts lean by Love's high decree
Together on his heart for ever true,
As the cloud-foaming firmamental blue
  Rests on the blue line of a foamless sea.

Silent Noon

Your hands lie open in the long fresh grass,—
  The finger-points look through like rosy blooms:
  Your eyes smile peace. The pasture gleams and glooms
'Neath billowing skies that scatter and amass.
All round our nest, far as the eye can pass,
  Are golden kingcup-fields with silver edge
  Where the cow-parsley skirts the hawthorn hedge.
'Tis visible silence, still as the hourglass.

Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky:—
  So this wing'd hour is dropt to us from above.
Oh! clasp we to our hearts, for deathless dower,
This close-companioned inarticulate hour
  When twofold silence was the song of love.

Heart's Compass

Sometimes thou seem'st not as thyself alone,
  But as the meaning of all things that are;
  A breathless wonder, shadowing forth afar
Some heavenly solstice hushed and halcyon;
Whose unstirred lips are music's visible tone;
  Whose eyes the sun-gate of the soul unbar,
  Being of its furthest fires oracular;—
The evident heart of all life sown and mown.

Even such love is; and is not thy name Love?
  Yea, by thy hand the Love-god rends apart
  All gathering clouds of Night's ambiguous art;
Flings them far down, and sets thine eyes above;
And simply, as some gage of flower or glove,
  Stakes with a smile the world against thy heart.

Her Gifts

High grace, the dower of queens; and therewithal
  Some wood-born wonder's sweet simplicity;
  A glance like water brimming with the sky
Or hyacinth-light where forest-shadows fall;
Such thrilling pallor of cheek as doth enthral
  The heart; a mouth whose passionate forms imply
  All music and all silence held thereby;
Deep golden locks, her sovereign coronal;

A round reared neck, meet column of Love's shrine
  To cling to when the heart takes sanctuary;
  Hands which for ever at Love's bidding be,
And soft-stirred feet still answering to his sign:—
These are her gifts, as tongue may tell them o'er.
Breathe low her name, my soul; for that means more.

The Dark Glass

Not I myself know all my love for thee:
  How should I reach so far, who cannot weigh
  To-morrow's dower by gage of yesterday?

Shall birth and death, and all dark names that be
As doors and windows bared to some loud sea,
  Lash deaf mine ears and blind my face with spray;
  And shall my sense pierce love,—the last relay
And ultimate outpost of eternity?

Lo! what am I to Love, the lord of all?
  One murmuring shell he gathers from the sand.—
  One little heart-flame sheltered in his hand.
Yet through thine eyes he grants me clearest call
And veriest touch of powers primordial
  That any hour-girt life may understand.

True Woman—I. Herself

To be a sweetness more desired than Spring;
  A bodily beauty more acceptable
  Than the wild rose-tree's arch that crowns the fell;
To be an essence more environing
Than wine's drained juice; a music ravishing
  More than the passionate pulse of Philomel;—
  To be all this 'neath one soft bosom's swell
That is the flower of life:—how strange a thing!

How strange a thing to be what Man can know
  But as a sacred secret! Heaven's own screen
Hides her soul's purest depth and loveliness glow;
Closely withheld, as all things most unseen,—
  The wave-bowered pearl,—the heart-shaped seal of green
That flecks the snowdrop underneath the snow.

True Woman—II. Her Love

She loves him; for her infinite soul is Love,
  And he her lodestar. Passion in her is
  A glass facing his fire, where the bright bliss
Is mirrored, and the heat returned. Yet move
That glass, a stranger's amorous flame to prove,
  And it shall turn, by instant contraries,
  Ice to the moon; while her pure fire to his
For whom it burns, clings close i' the heart's
    alcove.

Lo! they are one. With wifely breast to breast
  And circling arms, she welcomes all command
  Of love,—her soul to answering ardors fann'd:
Yet as morn springs or twilight sinks to rest,
Ah! who shall say she deems not loveliest
  The hour of sisterly sweet hand-in-hand?

True Woman—III. Her Heaven

If to grow old in Heaven is to grow young,
  (As the Seer saw and said,) then blest were he
  With youth for evermore, whose heaven should
    be
True Woman, she whom these weak notes have
    sung,
Here and hereafter,—choir-strains of her tongue,—
  Sky-spaces of her eyes,—sweet signs that flee
  About her soul's immediate sanctuary,—
Were Paradise all uttermost worlds among.

The sunrise blooms and withers on the hill
  Like any hillflower; and the noblest troth
  Dies here to dust. Yet shall Heaven's promise clothe
Even yet those lovers who have cherished still
This test for love:—in every kiss sealed fast
To feel the first kiss and forbode the last.

A Superscription

Look in my face; my name is Might-have-been;
  I am also called No-more, Too-late, Farewell;
  Unto thine ear I hold the dead-sea shell
Cast up thy Life's foam-fretted feet between;
Unto thine eyes the glass where that is seen
  Which had Life's form and Love's, but by my spell
  Is now a shaken shadow intolerable,
Of ultimate things unuttered the frail screen.

Mark me, how still I am! But should there dart
  One moment through thy soul the soft surprise
  Of that winged Peace which lulls the breath of sighs,—
Then shalt thou see me smile, and turn apart
Thy visage to mine ambush at thy heart
  Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

THE BLESSED DAMOZEL

THE blessed damozel leaned out
From the gold bar of Heaven;
Her eyes were deeper than the depth
Of waters stilled at even;
She had three lilies in her hand,
And the stars in her hair were seven.

Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flowers did adorn,
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn;
Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.

Her seemed she scarce had been a day
One of God's choristers;
The wonder was not quite yet gone
From that still look of hers;
Albeit, to them she left, her day
Had counted as ten years.

(To one, it is ten years of years.
. . . Yet now, and in this place,
Surely she leaned o'er me—her hair
Fell all about my face. . . .
Nothing: the autumn fall of leaves.
The whole year sets apace.)

It was the rampart of God's house
  That she was standing on;
By God built over the sheer depth
  The which is Space begun;
So high, that looking downward thence
  She scarce could see the sun.

It lies in Heaven, across the flood
  Of ether, as a bridge.
Beneath, the tides of day and night
  With flame and darkness ridge
The void, as low as where this earth
  Spins like a fretful midge.

Heard hardly, some of her new friends
  Amid their loving games
Spake evermore among themselves
  Their virginal chaste names;
And the souls mounting up to God
  Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
  Out of the circling charm;
Until her bosom must have made
  The bar she leaned on warm,
And the lilies lay as if asleep
  Along her bended arm.

From the fixed place of Heaven she saw
  Time like a pulse shake fierce
Through all the worlds. Her gaze still strove
  Within the gulf to pierce
Its path; and now she spoke as when
  The stars sang in their spheres.

The sun was gone now; the curled moon
  Was like a little feather
Fluttering far down the gulf; and now
  She spoke through the still weather.
Her voice was like the voice the stars
  Had when they sang together.

(Ah sweet! Even now, in that bird's song,
  Strove not her accents there,
Fain to be hearkened? When those bells
  Possessed the midday air,
Strove not her steps to reach my side
  Down all the echoing stair?)

"I wish that he were come to me,
  For he will come," she said.
"Have I not prayed in Heaven?—on earth,
  Lord, Lord, has he not pray'd?
Are not two prayers a perfect strength?
  And shall I feel afraid?

"When round his head the aureole clings,
And he is clothed in white,
I'll take his hand and go with him
To the deep wells of light;
We will step down as to a stream,
And bathe there in God's sight.

"We two will stand beside that shrine,
Occult, withheld, untrod,
Whose lamps are stirred continually
With prayer sent up to God;
And see our old prayers, granted, melt
Each like a little cloud.

"We two will lie i' the shadow of
That living mystic tree
Within whose secret growth the Dove
Is sometimes felt to be,
While every leaf that His plumes touch
Saith His Name audibly.

"And I myself will teach to him,
I myself, lying so,
The songs I sing here; which his voice
Shall pause in, hushed and slow,
And find some knowledge at each pause,
Or some new thing to know."

(Alas! We two, we two, thou say'st!
  Yea, one wast thou with me
That once of old. But shall God lift
  To endless unity
The soul whose likeness with thy soul
  Was but its love for thee?)

"We two," she said, "will seek the groves
  Where the lady Mary is,
With her five handmaidens whose names
  Are five sweet symphonies,
Cecily, Gertrude, Magdalen,
  Margaret and Rosalys.

"Circlewise sit they, with bound locks
  And foreheads garlanded;
Into the fine cloth white like flame
  Weaving the golden thread,
To fashion the birth-robes for them
  Who are just born, being dead.

"He shall fear, haply, and be dumb:
  Then will I lay my cheek
To his, and tell about our love,
  Not once abashed or weak:
And the dear Mother will approve
  My pride, and let me speak.

"Herself shall bring us, hand in hand,
  To Him round whom all souls
Kneel, the clear-ranged unnumbered heads
  Bowed with their aureoles:
And angels meeting us shall sing
  To their citherns and citoles.

"There will I ask of Christ the Lord
  Thus much for him and me:—
Only to live as once on earth
  With Love,—only to be,
As then awhile, for ever now
  Together, I and he."

She gazed and listened and then said
  Less sad of speech than mild,—
"All this is when he comes." She ceased.
  The light thrilled toward her, fill'd
With angels in strong level flight.
  Her eyes prayed, and she smil'd.

(I saw her smile.) But soon their path
  Was vague in distant spheres:
And then she cast her arms along
  The golden barriers,
And laid her face between her hands,
  And wept. (I heard her tears.)

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI.

THE SIEGE OF BERLIN

AS WE went up the Champs Élysées with Doctor V——, we gleaned the story of Paris the besieged from the walls shattered by shells and the streets torn up by grapeshot. Just before coming to the Place de l'Étoile, the Doctor paused to point out to me one of the imposing groups of mansions opposite the Arc de Triomphe.

"Do you see," he said, "the four closed windows up there on the balcony? At the beginning of August—that awful month of August, 1870, so fraught with wreck and ruin—I was called upon to attend an apoplectic case there. The stricken one was Colonel Jouve, a veteran Cuirassier of the First Empire. Surcharged with patriotic feeling and the glory of it, he had taken a balconied apartment in the Champs Élysées when the war broke out—and for what reason, do you imagine? To witness the triumphal return of our troops! Poor old fellow! Word of Wissembourg came as he got up from the table. At seeing Napoleon's name at the bottom of that bulletin of defeat, he fell insen-

sible. I found the old Cuirassier prostrate upon the floor. His face was bloody, and he was senseless—as if struck with a club. On his feet, he would have been unusually tall; lying prone, he seemed gigantic. With fine features, splendid teeth, and curly hair, he carried his eighty years as if they were sixty. His granddaughter knelt over him in tears. She bore close resemblance to him. Side by side, they suggested to me two Greek medallions from the same die, only one was antique, earth-marked, its outlines slightly worn, while the other had all the charm of clear and fresh beauty.

"The grief of this child moved me. A daughter and granddaughter of soldiers—her father was one of MacMahon's staff—the spectacle of this old man laid out in front of her brought to her mind another vision not less fearful. I tried my best to comfort her, though really I had little or no hope. We had to deal with hemoptysis, which at eighty is almost certainly fatal. Three days the patient remained thus, in a condition of lifelessness and torpor. In the interim, the news of Reichshofen came—recollect how oddly? Until evening, we all believed in a wonderful victory—twenty thousand Prussians wiped out, and the Crown Prince a prisoner.

"I shall never be able to determine by what miracle or magnetic force an intimation of this universal rejoicing could have reached our invalid. Heretofore, he had been deaf to everything about him, but that evening, on coming

to his bedside, I beheld a new creature. His eye was bright, his speech easier, and he had sufficient strength to smile and stammer:

"'Victory, victory.'

"'Yes, Colonel, a great victory.'

"And, as I related the details of MacMahon's glorious success, I saw his face soften and become illumined.

"When I was about to go his granddaughter, pale and sobbing, appealed to me.

"'But he is saved,' I said, pressing both her hands.

"The poor girl had hardly enough courage to reply. The real Reichshofen had just been announced: MacMahon a fugitive, the whole army beaten. Our eyes met in a look of consternation; she was full of concern for her father, while I feared for the grandfather. This new shock would be too much for him; but what were we to do? Leave him to the enjoyment of the delusion that had restored him to consciousness? To do this, we must practise duplicity. Hastily wiping away her tears, the brave girl said, 'Well, then, I will deceive him,' and returned to her grandfather's room with a cheerful face.

"What she had resolved to do was no light task. At first, because of his weak head, the old man believed everything told him with childish credulity. But, as he gained strength, his ideas became clearer.

"To keep in touch with the maneuvering of the army, despatches from the front were fabri-

cated. Pitiable it was, indeed, to see that charming girl poring day and night over her map of Germany, studding it with little flags, planning an entire, splendid campaign—Bazaine on the way to Berlin, Frossard in Bavaria, MacMahon on the Baltic Sea. In doing this she asked for my advice, and I helped her as much as I could, but in these feigned hostilities the grandfather was of the greatest assistance. During the First Empire, he had conquered Germany so often. He knew all the tactics they should employ. 'Now they will do this. They should go there.' And he was proud to have all his predictions fulfilled. We captured towns, and won battles, but never fast enough for the Colonel, who was insatiable. He greeted me with a new stratagem every day.

"'Mayence is taken, Doctor,' said the young girl, meeting me with a pitiful smile, and through the door I heard the rapturous cry:

"'We are moving, we are moving! We shall take Berlin in a week!'

"At that very moment the Prussians wanted but a week to enter Paris. We considered moving to the provinces, but out there, where he could see the havoc made in the country, he would discover the truth, and I thought him still too weak to bear it. We decided to stay in town. On the first day of the siege, I called upon my patient with misgivings, I recollect, and with that heart-agony felt by all at the thought that the gates of Paris were closed, that

the war had reached our very walls, and that our suburbs and frontiers were one.

"I found the old man elated. 'Well, the siege has begun,' he said. I looked at him in stupefaction.

"'Why, Colonel, how do you know?'

"His granddaughter glanced at me, and said, 'Oh, yes, Doctor, it is glorious news—the siege of Berlin has begun.'

"She quietly said this while plying her needle. He was entirely without suspicion. The roaring of the cannon he could not hear, nor could he see Paris, the ill-fated, in dark demoralization. What he did see from the watch-tower of his bed helped to carry out the delusion. With the Arc de Triomphe outside, there were in the room many reminders of the First Empire. Portraits of marshals, engravings of battles, the son of Napoleon in his baby-clothes; the austere brackets decked with brazen battle-memorials covered with Imperial relics, medals, bronzes; a stone from St. Helena, under a glass shade; numerous miniatures of a light-eyed, much-becurled lady in ball dress (a yellow gown with leg-of-mutton sleeves); and all these—the brackets, Napoleon's son, the medals, the yellow ladies in the gaudy straightness of the Empire gown, short-waisted and sashed under the arms—it was this environment of victorious warfare which made the siege of Berlin a fact so real to the poor Colonel!

"Thereafter, our military movements were

less involved, and the taking of Berlin was merely a question of time. When the old man grew impatient with waiting, we would read him a letter from his son, fictitious, of course, as nothing entered Paris, and as, since Sedan, MacMahon's aide-de-camp was in a German fortress.

"Imagine, if you can, the desperation of the poor girl, with no news of her father, certain that he was in prison, necessitous, probably sick, and still pretending to make him speak in hopeful letters, properly brief, of course, as from a soldier on duty marching through a subjugated country. Often, when the invalid suffered from excessive weakness, news would not come for weeks. But suddenly, when he was worried and sleepless, a letter would arrive from Germany, which she read merrily at his bedside, choking back her tears. The Colonel listened attentively, with an air of smiling patronage, assenting, censuring, interpreting. But he outdid himself in his replies to his son. 'Always remember that you are a son of France,' he wrote; 'be kind to those unfortunate people. Make the invasion no harder than they can bear.'

"His counsel was unceasing: instructive lectures regarding the rights of others; the courtesy due to ladies—in fact, a complete guide to conquerors on the preservation of military honor. Besides this were some thoughts on diplomacy, and stipulations regarding the terms of peace to be made with the defeated. Concerning the latter, he was most generous: 'The indemnity

of the war, but no more. Of what use is it to take provinces? Germany cannot be changed into France!'

"While giving these directions his voice never faltered, and his words evinced so much honesty of purpose and love of country that we were deeply moved. And all this time the siege was in progress, but not the siege of Berlin, alas!

"The weather was at its coldest, and we were suffering the heaviest bombardment, and the worst horrors of epidemic and famine. But owing to our care, and the unwearied tenderness bestowed upon him, the old man's comfort was never disturbed for a moment. I was even able to obtain white bread and fresh meat for him to the very end, but only for him.

"Could anything have been more touching than those breakfasts of the grandfather, so guilelessly selfish, propped up in bed, bright and smiling, a napkin tucked under his chin, by him his granddaughter wan because of deprivation, directing the movements of his hands, compelling him to drink, urging him to eat the good things procured with such difficulty? Strengthened by a meal, and cheered by the warmth of the room, the old Cuirassier was reminded, by the snow which whirled past the window, to speak of his northern campaigns, and would tell us of that disastrous retreat from Russia, with nothing to eat but frozen biscuit and horse-flesh.

"'Can you imagine that, little one? We ate horse-flesh.'

"Of course she could imagine it, since, for two months, she had eaten nothing else!

"As he grew convalescent, our difficulties increased. The numbness passed from his senses as well as from his limbs, which made it all the harder for us to deceive him. On one or two occasions the cannonading at the Porte Maillot had made him start and listen like a horse on the battle-field; we accounted for it by telling him that Bazaine had just achieved a wonderful victory before Berlin, and what he had heard was the firing of salvos from the Invalides in honor of it.

"On the Thursday of Buzenval, we pushed his bed to the window, from which he saw some of the National Guard massed upon the Avenue de la Grande Armée.

"'What soldiers are those?' he inquired, and we heard him muttering, 'Badly drilled—badly drilled.'

"Nothing else was said, but we made up our minds to show more caution in the future. Only, we did not show enough.

"The child met me, one evening, in great distress. 'To-morrow they enter the city,' she said.

"Was her grandfather's door open then? In reflecting upon that evening afterwards, I have remembered that his face indicated great pensiveness. He may accidentally have heard what we said, thinking only of the French and their long-looked-for return with victory perched on

their banners: MacMahon coming down the Avenue showered with flowers, and trumpets blowing a flourish; beside the Marshal, his own son; himself, on his balcony in the full uniform of Lützen, saluting the torn colors and powder-blackened eagles!

"Poor Colonel Jouve! Probably he fancied that we wished to keep him from participating at the defile of our troops, fearing the excitement would be too much for him, and so concealing it from him. But on the morrow, just as the Prussian army crept into the long road leading from the Porte Maillot to the Tuileries, the Colonel, arrayed in the battle-stained but glorious uniform of Milhaud's Cuirassiers, with helmet and sword, quietly raised the window, and stepped out upon the balcony.

"It seemed as if every effort of a fast-failing body and iron will had been summoned for this supreme moment, that he might stand to order, ready in harness.

"But what met his gaze as he stood at the railing? Paris, a hospital; all shutters closed; the broad Avenue silent; flags everywhere, but all white, stained with the red cross of suffering, and no one to meet our soldiers. He may have thought it all a mistake for an instant.

"But no. From behind the Arc de Triomphe comes the muffled sound of advancing troops, stepping to the measured beat of the little drums of Jena, then the spikes of helmets catch the sunlight, and, when the Place de l'Étoile is reached

the heavy tramp, tramp of soldiers to the strains of Schubert's Triumphal March force the shocking truth upon him.

"An awful cry broke the sorrowful silence of the streets—a terrible cry:

"'To arms! To arms! The Prussians!'

"The four lancers who were in the vanguard might have looked up and seen a tall, old man wave his arms, stagger, and fall.

"Colonel Jouve had died at his post."

ALPHONSE DAUDET.

THE LAST CLASS

I WAS very late for school that morning, and I was afraid of being scolded, especially as Monsieur Hamel had told us that he should examine us on participles, and I did not know the first thing about them. For a moment I thought of staying away from school and wandering about the fields. It was such a warm, lovely day. I could hear the blackbirds whistling on the edge of the wood, and in the Rippert field, behind the sawmill, the Prussians going through their drill. All that was much more tempting to me than the rules concerning participles; but I had the strength to resist, and I ran as fast as I could to school.

As I passed the Mayor's office, I saw that there were people gathered about the little board on which notices were posted. For two years all our bad news had come from that board—battles lost, conscriptions, orders from headquarters; and I thought without stopping:

"What can it be now?"

Then, as I ran across the square, Wachter the blacksmith, who stood there with his apprentice, reading the placard, called out to me:

"Don't hurry so, my boy; you'll get to your school soon enough!"

I thought that he was making fun of me, and I ran into Monsieur Hamel's little yard all out of breath.

Usually, at the beginning of school, there was a great uproar which could be heard in the street, desks opening and closing, lessons repeated aloud in unison, with our ears stuffed in order to learn quicker, and the teacher's stout ruler beating on the desk:

"A little more quiet!"

I counted on all this noise to reach my bench unnoticed, but as it happened, that day everything was quiet, like a Sunday morning. Through the open window I saw my comrades already in their places, and Monsieur Hamel walking back and forth with the terrible iron ruler under his arm. I had to open the door and enter, in the midst of that perfect silence. You can imagine whether I blushed and whether I was afraid!

But no! Monsieur Hamel looked at me with no sign of anger and said very gently:

"Go at once to your seat, my little Frantz; we were going to begin without you."

I stepped over the bench and sat down at once at my desk. Not until then, when I had partly recovered from my fright, did I notice that our

teacher had on his handsome blue coat, his plaited ruff, and the black embroidered breeches, which he wore on days of inspection or of distribution of prizes. Moreover, there was something extraordinary, something solemn about the whole class. But what surprised me most was to see at the back of the room, on the benches which were usually empty, some people from the village sitting, as silent as we were: old Hauser with his three-cornered hat, the ex-mayor, the ex-postman, and others besides. They all seemed depressed; and Hauser had brought an old spelling-book with gnawed edges, which he held wide-open on his knee, with his great spectacles askew.

While I was wondering at all this, Monsieur Hamel had mounted his platform, and in the same gentle and serious voice with which he had welcomed me, he said to us:

"My children, this is the last time that I shall teach you. Orders have come from Berlin to teach nothing but German in the schools of Alsace and Lorraine. The new teacher arrives to-morrow. This is the last class in French, so I beg you to be very attentive."

Those few words overwhelmed me. Ah! the villains! that was what they had posted at the mayor's office.

My last class in French!

And I barely knew how to write! So I should never learn! I must stop short where I was! How angry I was with myself because of the time I had wasted, the lessons I had missed, running

about after nests, or sliding on the Saar! My books, which only a moment before I thought so tiresome, so heavy to carry—my grammar, my sacred history—seemed to me now like old friends, from whom I should be terribly grieved to part. And it was the same about Monsieur Hamel. The thought that he was going away, that I should never see him again, made me forget the punishments, the blows with the ruler.

Poor man! It was in honor of that last lesson that he had put on his fine Sunday clothes; and I understood now why those old fellows from the village were sitting at the end of the room. It seemed to mean that they regretted not having come oftener to the school. It was also a way of thanking our teacher for his forty years of faithful service, and of paying their respects to the fatherland which was vanishing.

I was at that point in my reflections, when I heard my name called. It was my turn to recite. What would I not have given to be able to say from the beginning to the end that famous rule about participles, in a loud, distinct voice, without a slip! But I got mixed up at the first words, and I stood there swaying against my bench, with a full heart, afraid to raise my head. I heard Monsieur Hamel speaking to me:

"I will not scold you, my little Frantz; you must be punished enough; that is the way it goes; every day we say to ourselves: 'Pshaw! I have time enough. I will learn to-morrow.' And then you see what happens. Ah! it has been the great

misfortune of our Alsace always to postpone its lessons until to-morrow. 'What! you claim to be French, and you can neither speak nor write your language!' In all this, my poor Frantz, you are not the guiltiest one. We all have our fair share of reproaches to address to ourselves.

"Your parents have not been careful enough to see that you were educated. They preferred to send you to work in the fields or in the factories, in order to have a few more sous. And have I nothing to reproach myself for? Have I not often made you water my garden instead of studying? And when I wanted to go fishing for trout, have I ever hesitated to dismiss you?"

Then passing from one thing to another, Monsieur Hamel began to talk to us about the French language, saying that it was the most beautiful language in the world, the most clear, the most substantial; that we must always retain it among ourselves, and never forget it, because when a people falls into servitude, "so long as it clings to its language, it is as if it held the key to its prison." Then he took the grammar and read us our lesson. I was amazed to see how readily I understood. Everything that he said seemed so easy to me, so easy. I believed, too, that I had never listened so closely, and that he, for his part, had never been so patient with his explanations. One would have said that, before going away, the poor man desired to give us all his knowledge, to force it all into our heads at a single blow.

When the lesson was at an end, we passed to

writing. For that day Monsieur Hamel had prepared some entirely new examples, on which was written in a fine, round hand: "France, Alsace, France, Alsace." They were like little flags, waving all about the class, hanging from the rods of our desks. You should have seen how hard we all worked and how silent it was! Nothing could be heard save the grinding of the pens over the paper. At one time some cockchafers flew in; but no one paid any attention to them, not even the little fellows, who were struggling with their straight lines, with a will and conscientious application, as if even the lines were French. On the roof of the schoolhouse, pigeons cooed in low tones, and I said to myself as I listened to them:

"I wonder if they are going to compel them to sing German, too!"

From time to time, when I raised my eyes from my paper, I saw Monsieur Hamel sitting motionless in his chair and staring at the objects about him as if he wished to carry away in his glance the whole of his little schoolhouse. Think of it! For forty years he had been there in the same place with his yard in front of him and his class just as it was! But the benches and desks were polished and rubbed by use; the walnuts in the yard had grown, and the hop-vine which he himself had planted now festooned the windows even to the roof. What a heart-rending thing it must have been for that poor man to leave all those things, and to hear his sister walking back and forth in the room overhead, packing their trunks! For

they were to go away the next day—to leave the province forever.

However, he had the courage to keep the class to the end. After the writing, we had the lesson in history; then the little ones sang all together the ba, be, bi, bo, bu. Yonder, at the back of the room, old Hauser had put on his spectacles and, holding his spelling-book in both hands, he spelled out the letters with them. I could see that he, too, was applying himself. His voice shook with emotion, and it was so funny to hear him, that we all longed to laugh and to cry. Ah! I shall remember that last class.

Suddenly the church struck twelve, then the Angelus rang. At the same moment, the bugles of the Prussians returning from drill blared under our windows. Monsier Hamel rose, pale as death, from his chair. Never had he seemed to me so tall.

"My friends," he said, "my friends, I—I——"

But something suffocated him. He could not finish the sentence.

Thereupon he turned to the blackboard, took a piece of chalk, and, bearing on with all his might, he wrote in the largest letters he could:

"Vive la France!"

Then he stood there with his head resting against the wall, and without speaking, he motioned to us with his hand:

"That is all; go."

ALPHONSE DAUDET.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RICHARD WAGNER

[The pages which follow are from the first volume of Wagner's Prose Works, translated by W. E. Ellis.]

I WAS born at Leipzig on May the 22, 1813. My father was a police actuary, and died six months after I was born. My stepfather, Ludwig Geyer, was a comedian and painter; he was also the author of a few stage plays, of which one, "Der Bethlehemitische Kindermord" (The Slaughter of the Innocents), had a certain success. My whole family migrated with him to Dresden. He wished me to become a painter, but I showed a very poor talent for drawing.

My stepfather also died ere long,—I was only seven years old. Shortly before his death I had learnt to play "Ub' immer Treu und Redlichkeit" (Ever True and Honest) and the then newly published "Jungfernkranz" (Bridal Wreath) upon the pianoforte; the day before his death, I was bid to play him both these pieces in the adjoining room; I heard him then, with feeble voice, say to my mother: "Has he perchance a talent for music?" On the early morrow, as he lay dead, my mother came into the children's sleeping-room, and said to each

of us some loving word. To me she said: "He hoped to make something of thee." I remember, too, that for a long time I imagined that something indeed would come of me.

In my ninth year I went to the Dresden Kreuzschule. I wished to study, and music was not thought of. Two of my sisters learnt to play the piano passably; I listened to them but had no piano lessons myself. Nothing pleased me so much as "Der Freischütz"; I often saw Weber pass before our house, as he came from rehearsals; I always watched him with a reverent awe. A tutor who explained to me "Cornelius Nepos," was at last engaged to give me pianoforte instructions; hardly had I got past the earliest finger exercises, when I furtively practised, at first by ear, the overture to "Der Freischütz"; my teacher heard this once, and said nothing would come of me. He was right; in my whole life I have never learnt to play the piano properly. Thenceforward I only played for my own amusement, nothing but overtures, and with the most fearful fingering. It was impossible for me to play a passage clearly, and I therefore conceived a just dread of all scales and runs. Of Mozart, I only cared for the "Magic Flute"; "Don Juan" was distasteful to me, on account of the Italian text beneath it: it seemed to me such rubbish.

. . . For a while I learnt English also, merely so as to gain an accurate knowledge of Shakespeare; and I made a metrical translation

of Romeo's monologue. Though I soon left English on one side, yet Shakespeare remained my exemplar, and I projected a great tragedy which was almost nothing but a medley of "Hamlet" and "King Lear." The plan was gigantic in the extreme; two-and-forty human beings died in the course of this piece, and I saw myself compelled, in its working-out, to call the greater number back as ghosts, since otherwise I should have been short of characters for my last acts. This play occupied my leisure for two whole years.

. . . From Dresden and its Kreuzschule, I went to Leipzig. In the Nikolaischule of that city I was relegated to the third form, after having already attained to the second in Dresden. This circumstance embittered me so much, that thenceforward I lost all liking for philological study. I became lazy and slovenly, and my grand tragedy was the only thing left me to care about. Whilst I was finishing this I made my first acquaintance with Beethoven's music, in the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts; its impression upon me was overpowering. I also became intimate with Mozart's works, chiefly through his "Requiem." Beethoven's music to "Egmont" so much inspired me, that I determined—for all the world—not to allow my now completed tragedy to leave the stocks until provided with such like music. Without the slightest diffidence, I believed that I could myself write this needful music, but thought it better to first clear up a few of the

general principles of thorough-bass. To get through this as swiftly as possible, I borrowed for a week Logier's "Method of Thorough-bass," and studied it in hot haste. But this study did not bear such rapid fruit as I had expected: its difficulties both provoked and fascinated me; I resolved to become a musician.

During this time my great tragedy was unearthed by my family: they were much disturbed thereat, for it was clear as day that I had woefully neglected my school lessons in favor of it, and I was forthwith admonished to continue them more diligently. Under such circumstances, I breathed no more of my secret discovery of a calling for music; but, notwithstanding, I composed in silence a sonata, a quartet, and an aria. When I felt myself sufficiently matured in my private musical studies, I ventured forth at last with their announcement. Naturally, I now had many a hard battle to wage, for my relations could only consider my penchant for music as a fleeting passion—all the more as it was unsupported by any proofs of preliminary study, and especially by any already won dexterity in handling a musical instrument.

I may pass over the endless variety of impressions which exercised a lively effect upon me in my earliest youth; they were as diverse in their operation as in their source. Whether, under their influence, I ever appeared to any one an "infant prodigy," I very much doubt: me-

chanical dexterities were never drubbed into me, nor did I ever show the slightest bent toward them. To play-acting I felt an inclination, and indulged it in the quiet of my chamber; this was naturally aroused in me by the close connection of my family with the stage. The only remarkable thing about it all was my repugnance against going to the theater itself: childish impressions which I had imbibed from the earnestness of classical antiquity, so far as I had made its acquaintance in the Gymnasium, may have inspired me with a certain contempt, nay, an abhorrence of the rouged and powdered ways of the comedian. But my passion for imitation threw itself with greatest zest into the making of poetry and music—perhaps because my stepfather, a portrait-painter, died betimes, and thus the pictorial element vanished early from among my nearer models; otherwise I should probably have begun to paint, too, although I cannot but remember that the learning of the technique of the pencil soon went against my grain. First I wrote plays; but the acquaintance with Beethoven's Symphonies, which I only made in my fifteenth year, eventually inflamed me with a passion for music also, albeit it had long before this exercised a powerful effect upon me, chiefly through Weber's "Freischütz." Amidst my study of music, the poetic "imitative-impulse" never quite forsook me; it subordinated itself, however, to the musical, for whose contentment I only called it in as aid. Thus I recollect that, incited by the

Pastoral Symphony, I set to work on a shepherd-play, its dramatic material being prompted by Goethe's "Lovers' Fancies" (Laune der Verliebten). I here made no attempt at a preliminary poetic sketch, but wrote verses and music together, thus leaving the situations to take their rise from the music and the verses as I made them.

In the summer of 1834, I took the post of Music Director at the Magdeburg theater. The practical application of my musical knowledge to the functions of a conductor bore early fruit; for the vicissitudes of intercourse with singers and singeresses, behind the scenes and in front of the footlights, completely matched my bent toward many-hued distraction. The composition of my "Liebesverbot" (Forbidden Love) was now begun. I produced the overture to "Die Feen" (The Fairies) at a concert; it had a marked success. This notwithstanding, I lost all liking for this opera, and, since I was no longer able personally to attend to my affairs at Leipzig, I soon resolved to trouble myself no more about this work, which is as much as to say that I gave it up.

. . . In the midst of all this the "earnestness of life" had knocked at my door; my outward independence, so rashly grasped at, had led me into follies of every kind, and on all sides I was plagued by penury and debts. It occurred to me to venture upon something out of the ordinary, in order not to slide into the common rut of need. Without any sort of prospect, I

went to Berlin and offered the Director to produce my "Liebesverbot" at the theater of that capital. I was received at first with the fairest promises; but, after long suspense, I had to learn that not one of them was sincerely meant. In the sorriest plight I left Berlin, and applied for the post of Musical Director at the Königsberg theater, in Prussia—a post which I subsequently obtained. In that city I got married in the autumn of 1836, amid the most dubious outward circumstances. The year which I spent in Königsberg was completely lost to my art, by reason of the pressure of petty cares. I wrote one solitary overture: "Rule Britannia."

In the summer of 1837 I visited Dresden for a short time. There I was led back by the reading of Bulwer's "Rienzi" to an already cherished idea, viz., of turning the last of Rome's tribunes into the hero of a grand tragic opera. Hindered by outward discomforts, however, I busied myself no further with dramatic sketches. In the autumn of this year I went to Riga, to take up the position of first Musical Director at the theater recently opened there by Holtei. I found there an assemblage of excellent material for opera, and went to its employment with the greatest liking. Many interpolated passages for individual singers in various operas were composed by me during this period. I also wrote the libretto for a comic opera in two acts: "Die Glückliche Baren-familie," the matter for which I took from one of the stories in the "Thousand and One

Nights." I had only composed two "numbers" for this, when I was disgusted to find that I was again on the high road to music-making *à la Adam.* My spirit, my deeper feelings, were wounded by this discovery, and I laid aside the work in horror. The daily studying and conducting of Auber's, Adam's, and Bellini's music contributed its share to a speedy undoing of my frivolous delight in such an enterprise.

When, in the autumn, I began the composition of my "Rienzi," I allowed naught to influence me except the single purpose to answer to my subject. I set myself no model, but gave myself entirely to the feeling which now consumed me, the feeling that I had already so far progressed that I might claim something significant from the development of my artistic powers, and expect some not insignificant result. The very notion of being consciously weak or trivial—even in a single bar—was appalling to me.

My voyage to London, in a sailing vessel in the summer of 1839, I never shall forget as long as I live: it lasted three and a half weeks, and was rich in mishaps. Thrice did we endure the most violent of storms, and once the captain found himself compelled to put into a Norwegian haven. The passage among the crags of Norway made a wonderful impression on my fancy; the legends of the Flying Dutchman, as I heard them from the seamen's mouths, were clothed for me in a distinct and individual color, borrowed

from the adventures of the ocean through which I then was passing. . . .

Before I set about the actual working-out of the "Flying Dutchman," I drafted first the Ballad of Senta in the second act, and completed both its verse and melody. In this piece, I unconsciously laid the thematic germ of the whole music of the opera: it was the miniature of the whole drama, such as it stood before my soul; and when I was about to betitle the finished work, I felt strongly tempted to call it a dramatic ballad. In the eventual composition of the music, the thematic picture, thus evoked, spread itself quite instinctively over the whole drama, as one continuous tissue; I had only, without further initiative, to take the various thematic germs included in the ballad and develop them to their legitimate conclusions, and I had all the chief moods of this poem, quite of themselves, in definite thematic shapes before me. I should have had stubbornly to follow the example of the self-willed opera composer, had I chosen to invent a fresh motive for each recurrence of one and the same mood in different scenes; a course whereto I naturally did not feel the smallest inclination, since I had only in my mind the most intelligible portrayal of the subject-matter, and not a mere conglomerate of operative numbers.

"Tannhäuser" I treated in a similar fashion, and finally "Lohengrin," only that I here had not a finished musical piece before me in advance, such as that ballad, but from the aspect of the

scenes and their organic growth out of one another I first created the picture itself on which the thematic rays should all converge, and then let them fall in changeful play wherever necessary for the understanding of the main situations. Moreover, my treatment gained a more definite artistic form, especially in "Lohengrin," through a continual remodeling of the thematic material to fit the character of the passing situation; and thus the music won a greater variety of appearance than was the case, for instance, in the "Flying Dutchman," where the reappearance of a theme had often the mere character of an absolute reminiscence—a device that had already been employed, before myself, by other composers.

[The pages now given are from the correspondence of Wagner and Liszt, translated by Francis Hueffer.]

Creative power in music appears to me like a bell, which the larger it is, is the less able to give forth its full tone, unless an adequate power has set it in motion. This power is internal, and where it does not exist internally it does not exist at all. The purely internal, however, cannot operate unless it is stimulated by something external, related to it and yet different. Creative power in music surely requires this stimulus no less than does any other great artistic power; a great incitement alone can make it effective. As I have every reason to deem your power great, I desire for it the corresponding great incitement; for nothing here can be arbitrar-

ily substituted or added: genuine strength can only create from necessity. Wherever in the series of your pieces Goethe himself incites your strength, the bell resounds with its natural full tone, and the clapper beats in it as the heart does in the body. If you had been able to ring the whole "Faust" bell (I know this was impossible), if the detached pieces had had reference to a great whole, then that great whole would have thrown on the single pieces a reflex which is exactly the certain something that may be gained from the great whole, but not from the single piece. In single, aphoristic things we never attain repose; only in a great whole is great power self-contained, strong, and therefore, in spite of all excitement, reposeful. Unrest in what we do is a proof that our activity is not perfectly self-contained, that not our whole power, but only a detached particle of that power, is in action. This unrest I have found in your compositions, even as you must have found it too often in mine without better cause. With this unrest I was, however, better pleased than if comfortable self-contentment had been their prominent feature. I compare it to the claw by which I recognize the lion; but now I call out to you, Show us the complete lion: in other words write or finish soon an opera.

At the rehearsal of my "Tannhäuser" in Weimar I had occasion to point out the neglect of some scenic indications on the part of indi-

vidual singers. Elizabeth, for example, during the postlude of the duet with Tannhäuser in the second act, has to justify the reëntry of the tender theme in the clarinet in slower tempo by looking—as is indicated in the score—after Tannhäuser in the court of the castle and by beckoning to him. By neglecting this and merely standing in front, waiting for the conclusion of the music, she naturally produces an unbearable feeling of tedium. Every bar of dramatic music is justified only by the fact that it explains something in the action or in the character of the actor. That reminiscence of the clarinet theme is not there for its own sake as a purely musical effect, which Elizabeth might have to accompany by her action, but the beckoned greeting of Elizabeth is the chief thing I had in my eye, and that reminiscence I selected in order to accompany suitably this action of Elizabeth. The relations of music and action must therefore be deplorably perverted where, as in this instance, the principal thing—i. e., the dramatic motive—is left out, while the lesser thing—i. e., the accompaniment of that motive—alone remains.

I have quite finished the poem of my "Young Siegfried." It has given me great joy; it is certainly what I was bound to do, and the best thing that I have done so far. I am really glad about it. With my violent way of working, I am always considerably tired at the end. I

must take some time to recover. I cannot just yet make up my mind to copy it out for you, for many reasons, too long to tell. I feel also some bashfulness in submitting my poem to you without further explanation—a bashfulness which has its reason in me, not in you. I therefore ask you whether there is not a chance of my seeing you soon. Some time ago you made me think so. How is it now? Can you visit me, or at least appoint a place, accessible to me, for meeting? Please answer this question at once. My longing to see you, dear, splendid friend, again after two years, during which you have been more to me than I can describe, and to spend a few days with you, is greater than I am able to express. Can you fulfil this longing? If we could meet shortly, I should keep my "Young Siegfried," in order to read it to you. This would add to my peace of mind considerably. The written word is, I fear, insufficient for my intention; but if I could read it to you *viva voce*, indicating how I want to have it interpreted, I should be quite satisfied as to the desired impression of my poem upon you. Write to me at once what my chances are. If, alas! you cannot come, I shall have a copy made at once and send it you.

In the autumn of 1848 I sketched for the first time the complete myth of the "Nibelungen," such as it henceforth belongs to me as my poetic property. My next attempt at dramatizing the chief catastrophe of that great action for our

theater was "Siegfried's Death." After much wavering I was at last, in the autumn of 1850, on the point of sketching the musical execution of this drama, when again the obvious impossibility of having it adequately performed anywhere prevented me in the first instance from beginning the work. To get rid of this desperate mood, I wrote the book "Oper und Drama." Last spring your article on "Lohengrin" inspired me to such a degree that for your sake I resumed the execution of a drama quickly and joyously; this I wrote to you at the time: but "Siegfried's Death"—that, I knew for certain, was in the first instance impossible. I found that I should have to prepare it by another drama, and therefore took up the long-cherished idea of making the young Siegfried the subject of a poem. In it everything that in "Siegfried's Death" was either narrated or more or less taken for granted was to be shown in bold and vivid outline by means of actual representation. This poem was soon sketched and completed. When I was going to send it to you, I for the first time felt a peculiar anxiety. It seemed as if I could not possibly send it to you without explanation, as if I had many things to tell you, partly as to the manner of representation and partly as to the necessary comprehension of the poem itself. In the first instance it occurred to me that I still had many and various things to communicate previous to my coming before my friends with this poem. It was for that reason that I wrote the long preface to my three earlier operatic poems,

of which mention has already been made. After this I was going to begin the composition, and found, to my joy, that the music adapted itself to these verses quite naturally and easily, as of its own accord.

How about Raff? I thought he was writing a new work, but no; he is remodeling an old one. Is there no LIFE in these people? Out of what can the artist create if he does not create out of life, and how can this life contain an artistically productive essence unless it impels the artist continually to creations which correspond to life? Is this artificial remodeling of old motives of life real artistic creativeness? How about the source of all art unless new things flow forth from it irresistibly, unless it is wholly absorbed in new creations? Oh, ye creatures of God, do not think that this making is artistic creating. It betrays no end of self-complacency, combined with poverty, if we try to prop up these earlier attempts. If Raff's opera, as you tell me, has pleased, he ought to be satisfied; in any case he had a better reward than I had for my "Feen," which was never performed at all, or for my "Liebesverbot," which had one abominable performance, or for my "Rienzi," of the revival of which I think so little that I should not permit it if it were contemplated anywhere. About the "Dutchman," "Tannhäuser," and "Lohengrin" I trouble myself with disgust, and only for the reason that I know that, on account of imperfect representations, they

have never been perfectly understood. If they had had their due anywhere, I should care devilishly little about things that I have outlived.

Good people, do something new, new and once more new. If you stick to the old, the devil of barrenness holds you in thrall, and you are the most miserable of artists.

Well, this is off my heart; he who charges me with insincerity will have to answer heaven; he who charges me with arrogance is silly.

I can write no more; do not be angry; my head is bursting. Only let me say the warmest farewell that is in my heart. Love me as before and write soon.

Let me express to you, best of men, my astonishment at your enormous productiveness. You have a Dante symphony in your head, have you? And it is to be finished in the autumn? Do not be annoyed by my astonishment at this miracle. When I look back upon your activity in these last years, you appear superhuman to me; there is something very strange about this. However, it is very natural that creating is our only joy, and alone makes life bearable to us. We are what we are only while we create; all the other functions of life have no meaning for us, and are at bottom concessions to the vulgarity of ordinary human existence, which can give us no satisfaction. All that I still desire in this world is a favorable mood and disposition for work, and I find it difficult enough to protect these from the attack of vulgar-

ity. It is the same thing with you. But what astonishes me and appears worthy of envy is that you can create so much.

. . . I long for news from you. How are you, dear Franz, and does the Princess Wittgenstein keep her health? From her daughter I soon expect a letter, as we have promised to correspond with each other.

I feel so-so. I shall finish the first scene one of these days. Curiously enough, it is only during composition that the real essence of my poem is revealed to me. Everywhere I discover secrets which had been previously hidden from me, and everything in consequence grows more passionate, more impulsive. Altogether it will require a good deal of obstinacy to get all this done, and you have not really put me in the right mind for it.

However, I must think that I am doing all this for myself, in order to pass the days. Be it so.

You may believe me or not, I have no other desire than that of coming to you soon. Do not fail to let me know always what chances there are. I want music, too, and, heaven knows, you are the only one who can supply me with it. As a musician, I feel perfectly mean, while I think I have discovered that you are the greatest musician of all times. This will be something new to you. . . . .

Several times, dearest friend, I made an attempt to write to you on serious, and to me im-

portant, matters, but I had many things to settle in my own mind first. At last I feel sufficiently mature, and will tell you in plain words what is in my heart. Your last visit, much disturbed as was our intercourse, has left a decisive impression on me, which is this: your friendship is the most important and most significant event of my life. If I can enjoy your conversation frequently and quietly, and in my own way, I shall have all that I desire, and the rest will be of subordinate value. You cannot have a similar feeling, because your life is just the opposite of mine. You love diversion, and live in it, and your desire of self-concentration is therefore temporary. I, on the contrary, live in the most absolute solitude, and therefore want occasional diversion, which, however, in my meaning, is nothing but artistic stimulus. That stimulus the musical world cannot give me; you alone can. All that I lack, especially as a musician, owing to nature and insufficient education, my intercourse with you and no one else can alone give me. Without this stimulus my limited musical capacity loses its fertility; I become discontented, laborious, heavy, and producing becomes torture to me. I never had this feeling more vividly than since our last meeting.

I have therefore but one desire, that of being able to visit you when I wish, and of living with you periodically.

Very soon I hope to resume my long-interrupted work, and I shall certainly not leave my charm-

ing refuge even for the shortest trip before Siegfried has settled everything with Brynhild. So far I have only finished the first act, but then it is quite ready, and has turned out stronger and more beautiful than anything. I am astonished myself at having achieved this, for at our last meeting I again appeared to myself a terribly blundering musician. Gradually, however, I gained self-confidence. With a local prima-donna, whom you heard in "La Juive," I studied the great final scene of the "Valkyrie." Kirchner accompanied; I hit the notes famously, and this scene, which gave you so much trouble, realized all my expectations. We performed it three times at my house, and now I am quite satisfied. The fact is, that everything in this scene is so subtle, so deep, so subdued, that the most intellectual, the most tender, the most perfect execution in every direction is necessary to make it understood; if this, however, is achieved, the impression is beyond a doubt. But of course a thing of this kind is always on the verge of being quite misunderstood, unless all concerned approach it in the most perfect, most elevated, most intelligent mood; merely to play it through as we tried, in a hurried way, is impossible. I, at least, lose on such occasions instinctively all power and intelligence; I become perfectly stupid. But now I am quite satisfied, and if you hear the melting and hammering songs of "Siegfried" you will have a new experience of me. The abominable part of it is that I cannot have a

thing of this kind played for my own benefit. Even to our next meeting I attach no real hope; I always feel as if we were in a hurry, and that is most detrimental to me. I can be what I am only in a state of perfect concentration: all disturbance is my death.

WHEN I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me.

The moment I cross the threshold of a bank I am a hesitating jay. If I attempt to transact business there I become an irresponsible idiot.

I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month, and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I shambled in and looked timidly around at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager.

I went up to a wicket marked "Accountant." The accountant was a tall, cool devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was sepulchral.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added solemnly "alone." I don't know why I said "alone."

"Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held

my fifty-six dollars clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket.

"Are you the manager?" I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

"Yes," he said.

"Can I see you?" I asked. "Alone?" I didn't want to say "alone" again, but without it the thing seemed self-evident.

The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal.

"Come in here," he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key.

"We are safe from interruption here," said he; "sit down."

We both sat down and looked at one another. I found no voice to speak.

"You are one of Pinkerton's men, I presume," he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking and it made me worse.

"No, not from Pinkerton's," I said, seemingly to imply that I came from a rival agency. "To tell the truth," I went on, as if I *had* been prompted to lie about it, "I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank."

The manager looked relieved, but still serious: he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild, or a young Gould.

"A large account, I suppose," he said.

"Fairly large," I whispered. "I propose to

deposit fifty-six dollars now, and fifty dollars a month regularly."

The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

"Mr. Montgomery," he said, unkindly loud, "this gentleman is opening an account: he will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good-morning."

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

"Good-morning," I said, and stepped into the safe.

"Come out," said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him with a quick, convulsive movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick.

My face was ghastly pale.

"Here," I said, "deposit it." The tone of the words seemed to mean, "Let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us."

He took the money and gave it to another clerk. He made me write the sum on a slip and sign my name in a book. I no longer knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

"Is it deposited?" I asked, in a hollow, vibrating voice.

"It is," said the accountant.

"Then I want to draw a check."

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a check-book through a wicket, and someone else began telling

me how to write it out. The people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. I wrote something on the check and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

"What! Are you drawing it all out again?" he asked in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with misery, I made a plunge.

"Yes, the whole thing."

"You withdraw your money from the bank?"

"Every cent of it."

"Are you not going to deposit any more?" said the clerk, astonished.

"Never."

An idiot hope struck me that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the check and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper.

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

"How will you have it?" he said.

"What?"

"How will you have it?"

"Oh." I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think, "In fifties."

He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

"And the six?" he asked dryly.

"In sixes," I said.

He gave it me and I rushed out.

As the big doors swung behind me I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trousers pocket, and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

STEPHEN LEACOCK.

A LIZ-TOWN HUMORIST

SETTIN' round the stove, last night,
Down at Wess's store, was me
And Mart Strimples, Tunk, and White,
And Doc Bills, and two er three
Fellers of the Mudsock tribe
No use tryin' to describe!
And says Doc, he says, says he—
"Talkin' 'bout good things to eat,
Ripe mushmillon's hard to beat!"

I chawed on. And Mart he 'lowed
Wortermillon beat the mush—
"Red," he says, "and juicy—Hush!—
I'll jes' leave it to the crowd!"
Then a Mudsock chap, says he—
"Punkin's good enough fer me—
Punkin pies, I mean," he says—
"Them beats millons! What say, Wess?

I chawed on. And Wess says—"Well,
You jes' fetch that wife of mine
All yer wortermillon-*rine*,
And she'll bile it down a spell—

In with sorgum, I suppose,
And what else, Lord only knows!—
But I'm here to tell all hands,
Them p'serves meets my demands!"

I chawed on. And White he says—
"Well, I'll jes' stand in with Wess—
I'm no hog!" And Tunk says—"I
Guess I'll pastur' out on pie
With the Mudsock boys!" says he;
"Now what's yourn?" he says to me;
I chawed on—fer quite a spell—
Then I speaks up, slow and dry—
"Jes' tobacker!" I-says-I.—
And you'd orto' heered 'em yell!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

THE ELF-CHILD

LITTLE Orphant Annie's come to our house to stay,
An' wash the cups and saucers up, an' brush the crumbs away,
An' shoo the chickens off the porch, an' dust the hearth an' sweep
An' make the fire, an' bake the bread, an' earn her board an' keep;
An' all us other children, when the supper things is done,
We set around the kitchen fire an' has the mostest fun

A-listening to the witch tales 'at Annie tells about,
An' the Gobble-uns 'at gits you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

Onct they was a little boy who wouldn't say his prayers—
An' when he went to bed at night, away upstairs,
His mammy heerd him holler an' his daddy heerd him bawl,
An' when they turn't the kivvers down he wasn't there at all!
An' they seeked him in the rafter room an' cubby-hole an' press,
An' seeked him up the chimney-flue, an' every-wheres, I guess,
But all they ever found was thist his pants an' round-about!—
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' one time a little girl 'ud allus laugh an' grin.
An' make fun of ever'one an' all her blood an' kin.
An' onct when they was "company," an' old folks was there,
She mocked 'em, an' shocked 'em, an' said she didn't care;

An' thist as she kicked her heels, an' turn't to
run an' hide,
They was two great big Black Things a-standin'
by her side,
An' they snatched her through the ceilin' 'fore
she knowed what she's about!
An' the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

An' little Orphant Annie says, when the blaze is
blue,
An' the lampwick sputters, an' the wind goes
woo-oo!
An' you hear the crickets quit, an' the moon is
gray,
An' the lightnin'-bugs in dew is all squenched
away—
You better mind yer parents, an' yer teachers
fond an' dear,
An' churish them 'at loves you, an' dry the or-
phant's tear
An' he'p the pore an' needy ones 'at clusters all
about,
Er the Gobble-uns 'll git you
Ef you
Don't
Watch
Out!

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

THE LITTLE PEACH*

A LITTLE peach in the orchard grew,
A little peach of emerald hue;
Warmed by the sun and wet by the dew;
It grew.

One day, passing that orchard through,
That little peach dawned on the view
Of Johnny Jones and his sister Sue,
Them two.

Up at that peach a club they threw,
Down from the stem on which it grew
Fell that peach of emerald hue.
Mon Dieu!

John took a bite and Sue a chew,
And then the trouble began to brew,
Trouble the doctor couldn't subdue.
Too true!

Under the turf where the daisies grew
They planted John and his sister Sue.
And their little souls to the angels flew,
Boo hoo!

What of that peach of the emerald hue;
Warmed by the sun and wet by the dew?
Ah, well, its mission on earth is through.
Adieu!

EUGENE FIELD.

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DUTCH LULLABY

WYNKEN, Blynken, and Nod one night
Sailed off in a wooden shoe,—
Sailed on a river of misty light
Into a sea of dew.
"Where are you going, and what do you wish?"
The old moon asked the three.
"We have come to fish for the herring-fish
That live in this beautiful sea;
Nets of silver and gold have we,"
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

The old moon laughed and sung a song,
As they rocked in the wooden shoe;
And the wind that sped them all night long
Ruffled the waves of dew.
The little stars were the herring-fish
That lived in the beautiful sea;
"Now cast your nets wherever you wish,
But never afeard are we!"
So cried the stars to the fishermen three,
Wynken,
Blynken,
And Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
For the fish in the twinkling foam,
Then down from the sky came the wooden shoe,
Bringing the fishermen home;

'Twas all so pretty a sail, it seemed
  As if it could not be;
And some folk thought 'twas a dream they'd dreamed
  Of sailing that beautiful sea;
  But I shall name you the fishermen three:
                Wynken,
                Blynken,
                And Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,
  And Nod is a little head,
And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies
  Is a wee one's trundle-bed;
So shut your eyes while Mother sings
  Of the wonderful sights that be,
And you shall see the beautiful things
  As you rock in the misty sea
  Where the old shoe rocked the fishermen three,—
                Wynken,
                Blynken,
                And Nod.

EUGENE FIELD.

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